

The Love of God

To all Mankind,

In the Glorious Work of their
Redemption by *Jesus Christ*,

Asserted and Vindicated.

With a plain and sober Discussion of
those Controversies which are the
constant Concomitants of it, *viz.*
Election and Reprobation, God's
Foreknowledg, his Nature, Attributes,
and Decrees; the sufficiency of Means
vouchsafed to all Men to believe; the
use of the Law to Believers under the
Gospel.

Also concerning *Original Sin, Free-*
Will, and falling from Grace.

All fitted to the meanest Capacity, in
a way of Dialogue,

By *ZACHART STANTON.*

L O N D O N,

Printed, and sold by *M. Fabian* at *Mercers*
Chappel in Cheapside, 1700.

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T O T H E R E A D E R.

Courteous and Impartial Reader ;

I Should not have troubled thee with any Preface, were it not to comply with the desire of some Friends, and the Mode of the Times.

This Treatise (which I have adventured to expose to publick view and censure of all) I desire thee to take notice, is much of it a Collection, gathered from the Words and Writings of Persons concerned in this Controversy ; methodized and reduced to Form and Order (as my slender Knowledge and Leisure gave me leave) for the benefit of all well-disposed People that have a desire to look into the things controverted in this Point, and either could not reach the Price, or procure those large Volumes wherein this Subject is largely handled, by Men of piercing Judgments and known Abilities : here they may see the Substance of all the Controversy compendiously, in a little room, and with that plainness and brevity, that the meanest Capacity may reach it, as well with their Understanding as their Purse.

I know that those who live at ease, and have none to disturb the Peace of their Church, and the Prosperity of the Gospel, by sowing Tares in the Lord's Field, may think it strange in

this Day (wherein there should be rather a healing of Breaches, and a closing up the old Wounds than a heightning and increasing of them) to see any appear in print upon this Subject; nor have I done this as if I could be a Means to bring any new Matter which by former Worthys had not been said before, but for the settling and establishment of those to whom I belong, some of them looking that way; that so Satan might not beguile them to draw them from the simplicity and purity of that Doctrine revealed in the Word of God, and that I might prevent others from falling into error, through the studious Labours of many of corrupt Judgments, who, to our great sorrow we have found, care not how they stumble the weak, or what Divisions they make in the House of God, so they can but proselite a Party to carry on their uncouth Notions and preposterous Opinions, and whose heady Zeal hath brought this forth.

Tho at first it was written for the Information of a few private Friends, yet without any design for the Press, and hath been kept from it this two or three years, till of late this Opinion hath held up its head in our Parts; which tho it hath formerly and of late been often encountered by the Sword of the Spirit, yet like the Monster Hydra, having one Head chop'd off, two grew again: So this Error seems to spread and grow faster than of late; and tho they have left off openly to assert (tho owned in private) many of those frightful Sayings, and horrible Blasphemies found in many Authors, which are enough to make a godly Man's heart to bleed; yet now they with open face maintain, and by
secret

secret ways labour to undermine the Divine Foundation, and by crying up Grace, and the unconditionality of the Gospel-Covenant, and descrying all Inducements to Dutys and Obedience, as legal Preaching, with the terrible noise of Free-willers, Arminians, Popery: many well-meaning Christians, by such subtle Wiles, and secret Insinuations, are wounded and deceived through the cunning pretence of some that pretend to a more than ordinary pitch of Holiness and Purity, who, to carry on their Design, labour to work upon the Affections, and to gain upon the Hearts of those that are ready to entertain as Gospel any Errors, because of the affection to the Person that broach'd them; and when once the Judgment is distempered by Affection, all things are carried according to the pleasure of it. The vilest Deformitys, if they are Affection's Darlings, shall be accounted comely Ornaments: Let God and Man say what they will, 'tis all in vain; when their Understanding is captivated and lull'd asleep by their Dalilah, then Judgment and right Reason must truckle, and those dark and mysterious Sayings in the Scripture must be made to speak according as they fancy, while wholesome Truths are distastful, and will not go down by reason of some Prejudice conceived against the Author.

And therefore I am not without a foresight, that both my Person, and this my good Meaning, will be made the Butt at which will be shot all those sharp Arrows that Wit, Pride, and Envy can invent: But I am content to receive a Scratch, that others may scape a Wound, and to be accounted as the Filth and Off-scouring of all things,

things, that those who are intangled in Errors might learn the Truth; and therefore if I be reproached for it, notwithstanding all the care taken, I am content to suffer Reproach for the Cause of Christ, and do count it a very small thing to be judged of Man's Judgment.

And, Reader, I do assure thee, in the words of a Christian, that it is neither Profit, nor Credit, nor Thanks that I expect for my pains, but rather the contrary. I by experience find Persons are too apt to be offended with Truth and Plainness; yea, many mens Spirits are so exasperated against such as hold forth the Grace of God to all (which is the Subject of this Book) that if it were in their power, they would convince us we were in the wrong by Fire and Faggot; so distastful are either the Sayings or Writings of those that would take their Diana (that is, their Opinion) from them; and when they cannot ward off the down-right stroke of Truth, they will then set themselves to censure, slight, and revile those that speak for Truth. But great is Truth, and it will prevail in spite of the Sharp Tongues, or Iron Teeth of those that oppose it. And now, Reader, if thou beest a Reprobatarian, I do not know what cause thou hast to dislike me, or this Book, if thou wilt be true to thy Principles, that God from all Eternity freely and unchangeably ordain'd whatsoever comes to pass, and that God hath precisely decreed what Good and Evil shall be done; that all things happen not only by God's Prescience, but by his express Order and positive Decree; and that Man doth that which is not lawful for him to do, by the just impulse of God. If
this

(vii)

this be so, then surely all that I have done in this case, is but the necessary Issue of the Divine Decrees, having done nothing but what was not only natural, but necessary, being over-born by Fate, which I could not withstand; and if I have done amiss, I deserve pity from you rather than blame, tho I know (if your Doctrine be true) neither your Pity nor Prayers will do me any good, unless they were able to make a change in God's absolute Decree: for there cannot one Soul be saved which is ordained to Hell, nor one Soul be cast away which is appointed to Heaven; and so your Pity and Prayers may as well be spared, as spent to no purpose.

And, Reader, if thou beest one that art learned, 'tis likely thou wilt think this Discourse is a home-spun Piece: Why truly I am just of your mind, I think the same, and so there is no danger we should fall out; and by this let thee know it was designed for them that love to have it so, and written for the use of those that neither could nor did expect any Rhetorical Flourishes, or School-Distinctions from me, but only plain Truths: They knew that as I was ignorant of School Phrases, so I was clogged with worldly Business, and had neither learning nor time to dress up my Lines with Wit and Eloquence; neither doth Truth stand in need of gingling Flourishes or outward Bedaubing to make it more renowned in the World, it being best seen in its naked plainness.

And, Reader, if thou art a Critick (as this is a peevish and critical Age) or so highly conceited, that thou disdainest to look any farther, all that I shall say to thee is this, It will not hurt

hurt you if you can but let it alone : I never commanded you, neither do I care whether you read it or not ; and if you read it, and think your time and pains ill bestowed, blame your self for meddling with that you had nothing to do with. I know that all courteous and impartial Readers, and especially those that have desired this, will esteem it as much as I desire they should.

Reader, I will keep thee out no longer, pray walk in, and if you like your poor entertainment, you are heartily welcome ; fall to, and much good may it do you. Vale.

June 30.

1700.

ZACH. STANTON.

NB. Pray correct the following Fault with thy Pen before thou goest on.

Page 35. line 12. *Philadelphus* is to begin with these words, *What God foresees, &c.* The last line but one of the same page, blot out *Phil.*

The Love of God to all Mankind,

Asserted and Vindicated.

*By way of Dialogue between Martha
and Philadelphus, &c.*

Martha.

Well met *Philadelphus*, you
are walking and viewing
the Fields.

Philadelphus. Yes, and
the more I view, the more my heart is drawn
forth to bless and admire our good and gra-
cious God, who hath not left himself with-
out witness, filling our hearts with joy and
gladness: and though we have almost spent
the Fruits of the last year, yet is the Lord
preparing for us against another; how doth
the Hills and Vallies abound with Corn and
Grass, burdned Ears with plenty? They
rejoyce and clap their hands, and loudly
proclaim that *the Lord is good to all; and his
tender Mercies are over all his Works.*

Mar. Why is your heart so affected with
the Creature, or any goodness that is in
them?

B

Phil.

Phil. No, not so much as with the good God that sends them ; yet I cannot but admire that the glorious Majesty of Heaven and Earth should have any regard to us worthless Worms, thus to mind us with the Eyes of his Providence, when we are unmindful of him.

Mar. Why doubtless it is for the sake of his Elect People, that the Nation enjoys such Mercies ; otherwise the Lord would quickly turn this fruitful Land into barrenness ; yea, overthrow it as once he did *Sodom* and *Gomerrah*.

Phil. Although I do not question but (next unto Jesus, who is said to bear up the Pillars of the Earth) the Godly are the Pillars of a Nation ; they stay just deserved Judgments ; God Almighty would make short work in the World, bring all to its first Nothing, if it was not for the Godly ; which, as you say, are as so many *Lots* in *Sodom*, that preserve from such an overthrow ; yet surely God hath some gracious ends and design in giving such Temporal Mercies to the worst of Men, even that his Goodness and Mercy might lead them to Repentance.

Mar. Truly all these outward and temporal Mercies and Blessings which the worst of Men enjoy, are but like Crumbs which the Master of a Family throws to the Dogs ; or given with no other intent, than Men
give

give good Pasture to their Cattel, to fit them the sooner for Slaughter : *The prosperity of fools destroy them*, says *Solomon* ; that is, it shall be the means of heightning their Lusts, and thereby fitting them for Destruction.

Phil. As is your Name, so are you ; *Martha* is your Name, and bitter are your words. Come sit you down here by me under this Shade, and let us spend one hour in Discourse together, if your occasion will permit.

Mar. I am content.

Phil. Truly I did not think (till I heard it out of your own Mouth) that any could entertain such harsh and unworthy suspicions of the God of Love ; as if his Mercies to any were designed on purpose to multiply their guilt, or to heighten their eternal Damnation : No, *Martha* ; God hath more noble and worthy Ends and Designs than such you spake of : God is Love, and he hath no pleasure in the ruin of his Creatures. If their Prosperity destroy them, if his Mercies (which should lead them to Repentance, and have been a powerful means to ingage their hearts to love the Lord) any ways heighten their guilt, and thereby fit them for Destruction ; 'tis not the effect of God's goodness, but rather of their obstinate wickedness, their abusing his Goodness, and turning his Grace into Wantonness, and not into Thankfulness ; this is that which kindles the wrath of God, as 2 *Chron.* 32. 25. But He-

zekiah rendred not again according to the Mercies, &c therefore wrath was upon him, &c. and for this cause was it, that the Heathens were given up to vile affections. But pray tell me, do not all Men in the World stand bound to be thankful to God for outward Mercies?

Mar. Yes, doubtless they do.

Phil. But how can any Man look upon himself any ways obliged to be thankful to God, for good things given with such hard intentions, even to make his Condemnation so much the greater? Had *Amasa* any cause to thank *Joab* for taking him friendly by the Beard to kiss him, when his intent was to stab him to the heart? And as little cause have any to be thankful to God for Temporal Injoyments, when all is made as a Gin and a Trap for their Souls; and God intends nothing but evil to them, and a fuller Cup of wrath to come. If this be a truth, how can the bountiffulness and long-suffering of God be said to lead Men to Repentance, which is the Apostle's Doctrine, *Rom. 2. 4*? Nothing can properly be said to lead Men any ways, but that which is proper to perswade or invite them to it.

Mar. Well, for all you think these words of mine are such hard sayings, yet I do farther affirm that all Men that are not by true Faith grafted into Christ, but remain in an unconverted state, all their Mercies are cursed to them: yea, they are cursed in every thing,

thing, in their Name, in their Estate, in their Food: for if they receive Food, they are Usurpers of that which is none of their own; if they receive no Food, they are self-Murderers; yea their Prayers, the Word and Sacraments are cursed to them.

Phil. The *Psalmist* saith, *Psf* 145.9. That the Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works. *Martha*, God is good to all during the day of our Patience and long-Sufferance; and what Mercy he affords to them may be called tender Mercy, considering their sinfulness, who deserve every moment to be cast into Hell: But how the tender Mercy of God can be said to be over those, when whatsoever God doth for them in a providential way, he doth all with an intent to harden them, that so he might bring destruction with the more severity and terror in the end; will Men, or can they call Health, Peace, Liberty, Food, Raiment, given with an intent to become a Snare unto them, and to bring unavoidable damnation upon them, the tender Mercies of God? Doth the Lord cause the Sun to rise upon the bad as well as upon the good, and send Rain upon the Unjust as well as upon the Just, in wrath, and with a curse? What, can infinite Goodness and Perfection be implacable to his Creatures? God forbid: Ah, *Martha*! What would have become of you and I long before this time, if God had not sought the good of his Creatures? Con-

sider we are all called the Lord's Off-spring,
Acts 17. All his Children by Creation.

Mar. What by that? What would you prove from thence?

Phil. What? Why then I think that the Lord must needs have a very tender regard to all, as they are his Creatures, the workmanship of his hands, and is not implacable to them in this World: Why may not God

deal with his Off-spring as we deal by ours? which of us that have Children, tho' they should prove very undutiful to us, and we could not

Goodman's Parable of the Prodigal Son.

love them with the love of delight, as we do those that are very dutiful, and are good and vertuous; yet at the worst we cannot chuse but pity them, and heap favours upon them: Why, thus doth the Lord to the Sons and Daughters of Men, though his delight is with them that fear him; yet those that are the worst he pities. And how can you think otherwise, when there is not one Soul but is dearer to him than the whole World? Neither did he count the Blood of his own Son too great a price for their Redemption; but I doubt you are one of those that hold, that God did from all Eternity fore ordain the greatest part of *Adam's* Off spring to everlasting destruction.

Mar. What if it was the Pleasure of God, to make a thousand Worlds, and then destroy

stroy them all? Is it meet for Man to say unto God, Why hast thou made me thus, or what dost thou? For he might glorify his Justice in the Damnation of all for their Sins, who shall question God about this.

Phil. I say that God is so far from destroying one whole World, that he is not willing that so much as one Soul should perish, *2 Pet. 3. 9.* and indeed who can think that our good and gracious God, whose Name and Nature is Love, should provide means of Life and Nourishment for Man in his Mother's Womb, when he could neither breath nor eat, should after he is born not provide as sufficient Means to nourish his Soul and Body to eternal Life? I may say in this case, as the Apostle in another, *dost God take care for Oxen?* hath God such a tender regard for the Bodies of Men, and hath he none for the Soul? surely he is every way as desirous of the welfare of the Soul as the Body! and hath declared by Oath, that he takes no pleasure in the Destruction of any, *Ezek. 33. 11, 12.* Who then is he that dare charge the God of Love with so much Cruelty, as to expose his own Children (at least by Creation) to be a prey to the Devil? What saith our Saviour, *Luke 11. 11.* which of you having Children, *if they ask Bread, will you give them a Stone, &c.* Can we that are evil have Compassion upon our Children? and will God harden himself as an

Ostrich against his Off-spring ? *Job 39. 16.* Doth God condemn Cruelty in others, and can we think he will harbour it in himself ? No, the Scripture of Truth doth every where abound in giving Testimony of the Love, Goodness, and Bountifulness of God to all his Creatures, and to Mankind above all other Works of his Hands in this lower World, in so much as our blessed Saviour recommends him in his Carriage towards the worst and most unworthy of Men, as an absolute Pattern for us to imitate, in doing Good, and shewing Mercy, even to our Enemies, *Matt. 5. 44, 45. Be ye therefore perfect, even as your heavenly Father is perfect;* that is, be you true Imitators of the Lord, Followers of God, as dear Children, in these works of Mercy and Kindness. Now *Martha*, pray you observe this ; if we should suppose that God hath irreversibly from Eternity doomed to everlasting Destruction, and without any respect to their Sin, those unjust ones, upon whom he causeth the Sun to rise, &c. it must necessarily follow, that while he did these good things to them, he intended the greatest Evil that can be inflicted or imagined, even the Vengeance of Eternal Fire ; which if so, then must those that imitate him in such ways be the most accursed Hypocrites and Dissemblers under Heaven, making shews of Love and Kindness, while War and Blood are in their Hearts ; and so
by

by this a Man may be most unjust, unmerciful, full of Dissimulation, hating most Men without any Cause, and yet be most like God; O horrid, and most unworthy a true Christian Believer!

Mar. What will you deny God to be omnipotent? hath not he an absolute Sovereignty and Lordship over his Creatures, with full Power to dispose of them as he pleaseth, and you that contend with God about his Sovereignty, unless you repent?

Phil. It cannot be denied, but that God hath an absolute Sovereignty and Lordship over his Creatures, that is, a lawful Power to dispose of them as he pleaseth; yet it is a horrible Indignity put upon him, and a great Injury done to the Goodness, Mercy, and fatherly Compassion of our good and gracious God, to affirm that he exerciseth this his Power upon the hardest Terms, and the most grievous unto his Creatures, that is, or can be imagined, and that which no ways is conducing to his own Honour and Glory, nay, very injurious to his Goodness, yet directly and immediately opposite to his very Nature, which is meer Goodness and Happiness, and hath no Affinity with Rigour, Cruelty or Misery: Read *Psal.* 34. 6. *Psal.* 86. 5. *Joel* 2. 13. *Jonah* 4. 2. *Micah* 7. 18. If God doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the Children of Men, without just cause, *Lam.* 3. 33. how can we in reason think, that
God

God in his eternal Purpose, and absolute Pleasure, should affect the extream Misery of any of his Creatures, for the shewing of the absolute Sovereignty he hath over them? If so, he may as well damn them, as create them.

How can we think that he should send them one after another into this World, to enjoy some of the good things of this Life, and after this short Life is over, to torment them with Devils and damn'd Spirits for ever, to shew his Power over them without just cause in the Creature? What saith *Abraham*, *Gen.* 18. 25. when he was interceding with God for *Sodom*, with respect to a temporal Judgment; *Wilt thou destroy the Righteous with the Wicked? that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the World do right?* If to destroy the Righteous with the Wicked was far from God in Temporals; shall we think that God resolved to punish the Innocent in Hell with wicked Spirits? For pray you observe; if God hath from Eternity reprobated the greatest part of Mankind; it must be understood that he look'd on them as Persons that would in time prove sinful, or else he reprobated them simply as Men. If the first, then was their Sinfulness wherein he beheld them the cause of their Rejection; if the second, then the pure and perfect Workmanship of his Hands, yea, that which *was very good*, *Gen.* 1. 31. must be the Object of his Repro-

Reprobation, which cannot be : it was a saying of one of the Ancients, *Aug. Lib. 3. Contr. Julian Cap. 31. Pag. 164.* " God is Good, and God is Just; he may without any desert, free Men from Punishment, because he is Good, but he cannot without Evil, desert and condemn any Man, because he's just. And again, *Aug. Epist. 106. ad Bonifac.* If God be believed to damn any man, that by Sin deserveth it not, he is not to be believed to be free from Injustice. And therefore for any to say, that God hath irrevocably reprobated the greatest part of the World to eternal Misery, before they had a being in this World, or any possibility of doing Good or Evil, he speaks more like a Mahumetan than a Christian, however more harsh, of the God of Love than he ought to speak, and reflects dishonour upon him, making him to be the Prime, Principal, and Irresistible Cause of the Damnation of Millions of Souls, appointing them to Destruction of his own voluntary Will, antecedent to any desert in them. No *Martha*, there is nothing can proceed from the God of Love, that is unjust, nothing unequal, nothing hard, nothing that any ways inclineth to the hurt of any of his Creatures considered as innocent; and therefore no irreversible decreeing or ordaining of Men to everlasting Destruction, as you pretend.

Mar. But doth not the Apostle, *Rom. 9. 20, 21.* shew, 'tis no unrighteous thing, no unequal or hard thing in God, to reprobate or predestinate to Destruction, which, or how many of his Creatures he pleaseth? 'Tis his lawful and just Prerogative, as he is absolute Lord of all: *Who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the Potter power over his Clay, to make one Vessel to honour, and another to dishonour?*

Phil. I know this 9th Chapter to the *Romans*, is the great Magazine and Fortrefs, wherein all your imaginary Strength lieth, and those Verses are the Weapons which you draw to silence those that question your horrid Notions about Personal Election and Reprobation. Pray do you think that *Paul* was about to prove personal Election and Reprobation in these Verses?

Mar. Yes, what else but to prove that God hath Power to create and appoint Vessels of Honour and Dishonour; and consequently of Wrath, as the Potter hath to make Vessels at his Pleasure, without contradiction, of the same Lump of Clay?

Phil. You are under a great mistake; the great Controversy lay about the Terms of Justification, whether by the Law or Faith, and not about personal Election and Reprobation; so that the Prerogative which the Lord

Lord claims to himself as a Royalty annexed to the Crown of Heaven and Earth, in this 9th of the *Romans*, or elsewhere, in respect to the Condemnation and Eternal Destruction of his Creatures, stands not in leaving what Persons he pleaseth to eternal ruin, but in making the condition of Life and Death, Salvation and Damnation as he pleaseth, according to the Counsel of his own Will, *Eph. 1. 1.* Now the Apostle was shewing the Way and Method that God will take in saving Sinners; and that it is not the purpose of God, that men should be justified by the Law, but by Grace, and through Faith: and tho the Jews much boasted of their being *Abraham's* Seed, and *Moses's* Disciples, and their observing of the Law, and judged it an equal thing, that God should make that Law to be the Law of Life, and Salvation to Men, and the neglect of it the Law of Death and Damnation; yet it being the good Pleasure of God to do otherwise, and to ordain Faith in his Son Christ Jesus, to be the way of Justification and Life, and Unbelief the way to Condemnation and Death, this Choice or Election shall stand, whatever Men may think meet and fitting for him to do. Therefore, saith he, *Verse 15.* *I will have Mercy upon whom I will have Mercy, and I will have Compassion upon whom I will have Compassion.* Men shall not prescribe unto me Laws or Terms of shewing Mercy; my

my Will shall not be bounded by Man's Will, neither will I be obliged by them what manner of Persons, or how qualified, I shall justify and save; I mean to keep close to the Counsel of my own Will, in that which concerns the Life and Death, the Salvation or Destruction of my Creatures; and so in this 21st Verse, *Hath not the Potter power over his Clay? &c.* meaning that God Almighty hath the like Power over the whole Lump of Mankind in *Adam*, to make what Laws of Life and Death he pleased, and to appoint what manner of Persons should be saved or condemned, which the Potter hath over the Lump of Clay, to make what Vessel he pleaseth for Honour or Dishonour. Now at best, this Scripture is but an Allusion; and should we suppose, that the Apostle doth compare the Lord to a Potter, as we often in Scripture find him compared to Persons and Things, and human Actions, Affections, and Members of a Man attributed to God and divine Things, because God in his Word descends as it were to our Capacities, expressing heavenly Matters after the manner of Men; yet it is not necessary, that all those things which are attributed to God, should have something in his Nature correspondent to them; according to that ancient Saying, *Similitudes are not wont to run on all-fours.* *Metaphors* are not to be strain'd to express things in themselves quite opposite, nor
make

make the parallel run till it grows lame; but great care must be taken, that no mean, base, or unworthy thing be attributed to the most high. And therefore from the Potter's Power over his Clay, to make thereof a Vessel of Honour or Dishonour as he pleaseth; to infer positively from thence, that God hath purposely made some to be Vessels of Wrath, is an unjustifiable Inference from that Similitude. Surely the Holy Ghost compares not our most wise Creator to a foolish Potter; who, because he might make what he would of his Clay, did therefore make the greatest number of his Pots to be broken again, to shew that he had as well a Power to break them, as to make them, which none but a mad Man would do; but rather to a wise Potter, that designs his Work for some good end and use: Doubtless God so made all things, that not one of his Creatures hath so much cause of dislike, as to say, *why hast thou made me thus?* No Vessel of Wrath came so made out of his Hands: So that if any be Vessels of Wrath, the fault is not in him, but in themselves, by reason of their Infidelity and Contempt of the Lord, and his long Sufferance. I know this place is usually made use of, as a Fortress for such as you are to flee to, and is misunderstood to imply what you say; but if you will but mind what the Apostle was upon, and let this place be expounded by the

Con-

Context, and other places of holy Scripture, so that the whole, and every part of God's Word may agree in one Truth, then we shall never take it in this sense of yours; for then this dark and obscure part of *Paul's* Epistle (which the Apostle *Peter* saith, *many wrest to their own Destruction, 2 Pet. 3. 16.*) must be taken openly to oppose and contradict the whole Course and Tenour of God's Word. Is there no way to understand the 9th of the *Romans*, than by making those places which sound severely to clash against those that sound compassionately? Is it not far the best way to interpret hard and doubtful Texts, by those many Texts that are clear and easy, than to interpret the many clear Texts by one that is dark and difficult? or if one Scripture may have a double sense, must we needs take it in the worst? must I needs say, that the Father of Mercy, and God of Consolation, which *doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the Children of Men*, did absolutely damn him, before he had done either good or evil? is it not the best so to understand it, that his Mercy and Justice, his Love and Power may imbrace and kiss each other? Now the Scripture speaks in some places darkly and dubiously, in other places it expresses the same thing more clearly and certainly; the doubtful are to be expounded by the certain, and dark places by those that are clear, and all Exposition answerably to the

the Current of Scripture not contrary to it. Now it doth seem as if the Apostle in these Words had an Eye to *Jeremiah* 18. 3, 4, &c. where he speaks of the Clay in the Potter's Hands ; not as it was in Creation, but in Vocation ; being marr'd in the Hands of the Potter ; and so finding it would not be for that use he designed it for, made thereof a Vessel as pleaseth him : " So God sometimes, " whilst he is at work to fashion a Soul for " his own Work, by the preaching of the " Gospel, by the sweet motion of his Spirit, by Mercy and long Sufferance ; yet " the Vessel is marr'd, the Clay yields not, " nor is pliable to the Will of God ; and so " finding it will not be a fit Vessel for Honour, he makes a Vessel of Dishonour. Read the 7, 8, 9, *Verses*, and compare them with 2 *Tim.* 2. 20, 21. so that it is plain, God made of one Lump all Innocent and Upright, *Gen.* 5. ult. *Eccles.* 7. ult. at the first. See what Mr. *Loveday* saith upon this, in his *Personal Reprobation Reprobated*, Page 243 ; " God (saith he) like a Potter makes of " low vile Man honourable Vessels : Hath " not the Potter, any ordinary Potter, " power over the Clay. to make it what " Vessel he pleaseth ? and when a piece thereof runs coarse, and is marr'd upon the " Wheel, hath he not power to make it a less " honourable Vessel ? and hath not God the " same (and much more power) over you " that

“ that have imbas’d your selves by slighting,
 “ and abusing all those Mercies he hath de-
 “ signed to bestow upon you, and thereby
 “ make you honourable? To be plain (saith
 “ the Apostle) why may not God for your
 “ Disobedience and Rebellion to his Son, as
 “ zealous as you are for the Law of *Moses*,
 “ of a glorious People, and invested with
 “ all those extraordinary Privileges, make
 “ you a base and contemptible People; and
 “ besides your continuing still in Unbelief,
 “ make your Condition far worse in the
 “ World to come? Such a Paraphrase as
 “ this seems to bear a sweet Harmony with
 “ *Jeremiah* 18. also with the Scope of the
 “ whole Context, and with the Apostle’s
 “ conclusive Result, *Verse* 32. that they did
 “ not attain to it, because they sought it
 “ not by Faith, but as it were by the Works
 “ of the Law. So that when Persons do Evil
 against God, and will not obey his Voice, but
 obey Unrighteousness, and harden their
 Hearts against him; then he will make them
 Vessels of Dishonour, prepared for Destruction:
 These are they that *Jude* speaks of,
Verse 4. that were of old ordained to this
 Condemnation, not simply, as they were
 Men, but ungodly Men, turning the Grace of
 God into Wantonness; &c. By what is, or might
 farther be said, we may see that those abso-
 lute Decrees of Mens inevitable Damnation
 is no part of God’s revealed Will: for if
 this

this *9th* of the *Romans* faileth to prove what you bring it for, as it is evident it doth ; then there is not the least shew in the Scripture for it : Nay, this Opinion of yours seems rather to be taken out of the Turkish Alcoran, or Heathen Authors, than the Bible ; for the Holy Scriptures are so far from containing, or asserting any such Exercise in God over his Creatures, which consists in a most severe and dreadful dooming them from Eternity to endless Misery, that on the other hand they frequently exalt him, as very gracious, loving, merciful and bountiful towards all ; and that there must be a great Breach on the Creatures part, in point of Degeneration, before the Lord gives him up to ruin, *Isa.* 27. 11. yea, the Love and Pity of God to his Creature Man, exceeds the Affections of a Father to his Son, or of the tenderest Mother to her sucking Child, *Mat.* 7. 11. *Isa.* 49. 15. *Martha*, I cannot forbear my Testimony against such unworthy Doctrines, when just occasion is offered ; for truly it makes my very Heart sink in me, to think what great Injury is done to the Justice, Mercy, and Love of God, who hath graciously ingag'd himself as a Creator to love and respect his Creatures, until they voluntarily renounce him, by walking in, and chusing sinful Ways, or suffer the God of this World to blind their Eyes, and to deface the Image of God in them. See what

the Lord saith by the Prophet *Isaiab*, Chap. 44. 2. *Thus saith the Lord that made thee, and formed thee from the Womb, which will help thee, &c.* and so Chap. 46. 3, 4. *Hearken unto me, O House of Jacob, and all the Remnant of the House of Israel, which are born by me from the Belly, which are carried from the Womb; even to old Age I am he, and even to hoary Hairs will I carry you, &c.*

Mar. Pray to what purpose do you bring these Scriptures? What would you have them prove? God speaks here to his Church, his Elect ones.

Phil. He speaks to the whole House of *Israel*, and you will grant that all were not true *Israelites* that were of *Israel*; nor because they were of the natural Seed of *Abraham*, were they all Children; but God reminds them that he was their Creator and Maker, and so consequently bore the love of a Creator to them all: and you ought to understand that the Relation of a Creator is one and the same to the Believer and Unbeliever, the one being the Workmanship of his hands as well as the other; as Holy *Job* speaks, Chap. 31. 13, 14, 15. and *Job* 34. 19. sheweth that God tenderly loveth and respecteth all, as they are his Creatures, till they renounce him, &c.

Mar. But did not the Lord say of *Pharaoh*, That for this same purpose he had raised him up, to shew his Power in him?
Doth

Doth it not shew, that God before he created *Pharaoh*, did peremptorily decree his State and Condition of Sin and Punishment ? yea, and as God dealt with *Pharaoh*, so doth he deal, and will deal with all Reprobates to the Worlds end.

Phil. How was that ?

Mar. Why, as God hardened his heart, so that he could not but be disobedient to all the Applications of God by *Moses* to him ; so those that are under an Eternal Decree of Reprobations, are under an impossibility of repenting or believing. In this *Rom.* 9. 17. the Apostle shews that God raised *Pharaoh*, made him a Man, a King, gave him Power over the Children of *Israel*, left him to the Corruption of his own heart, for the same purpose to manifest his Glory in his Confusion and Destruction.

Phil. You have no saying in the whole Book of God, that speaks of *Pharaoh's*, being reprobated to eternal misery before he was born ; or that he was decreed and ordained before he was born, by the Lord, to be a Vessel of Wrath ; or that God created him for this same purpose, that he might make his Power known in his Destruction. And therefore, as *Mr. Loveday* sheweth upon these words in his *Personal Reprobation Reprobated*, p. 157, 158, 159. 'tis not to be understood as referr'd to his Creation, or raising him to be a King, for then this Message

would have been applied to him when God first sent *Moses* to him, but we have not one word of it, till after the six Plagues ; and now he speaks of raising him up: so that this raising up must have respect to God's dealings with *Pharaoh*, in extending some special Favour to him, and so (saith he) “ To
 “ raise up signifieth (as the Learned in the
 “ Greek tell us) to raise up out of some low
 “ state and condition ; sometimes out of
 “ some Sickness, *James* 5. 15. The Hebrew
 “ words from whence the Apostle draws
 “ this, (Latined *Stare feci*) is read thus,
 “ I have made thee to stand ; the vulgar
 “ Latin reads it, I have sustained thee ; the
 “ Septuagint reads, Thou wert kept alive ;
 “ the Chaldee Paraphrase reads, For this cause
 “ have I endured thee, or patiently born
 “ with thee ; the generality of Interpre-
 “ ters, as well Calvinists as others, do
 “ receive this as the most proper reading ;
 “ I have made thee to stand ; I have kept
 “ or sustained thee ; thou hast been laid low
 “ under the sentence of Death, but upon
 “ *Moses's* Intercession I have raised thee up,
 “ I have rescued thee, I have forgiven thy
 “ disobedience, and tried thee again, by
 “ taking off my Plagues from thee and thy
 “ Land ; but it still after all this, thou
 “ should'st remain obstinate and rebellious,
 “ then the stroke shall be the heavier at last,
 “ my Power shall be seen in thy Destruction.
 And

And now as *Pharaoh* would not obey the Lord, in letting his People go, but bore himself proudly and stubbornly against the Lord, (being seduced by the Magicians) notwithstanding he had tasted of God's long-suffering and Mercies in raising him up at the request of his Servant *Moses*; so now he should deeply feel his Power in his Destruction; and so will the Lord do to all wilful rejecters of his Grace and Mercy in Christ Jesus, in these Gospel days. But I observe farther, that you seem to say, that God necessitated *Pharaoh* to be rebellious and hard-hearted against him, by an eternal Decree, so that he could not but be disobedient: But surely God doth not necessitate that which is contrary to his Nature; See *Mark* 3. 5. where Christ grieved for the hardness of their hearts, which, saith Mr. *Loveday* p. 173. supposeth these 4 things.

1st. That Christ had done what he could, *i. e.* what he could in Wisdom and Justice, to soften their hearts.

2dly. He declares, that such a frame of Spirit, *to wit*, hardness of heart, was contrary to his Spirit, or else he had not grieved for it.

3dly. They had sufficiency of means to have made them soft.

4thly. They were not necessitated to be so from him.

Mar. But did not the Lord tell *Moses* before he went to *Pharaoh*, that he would harden his heart, *Exod.* 4. 21 ?

Phil. 'Tis true, God did predict this Judgment which was afterward executed ; he did tell *Moses*, that he would harden *Pharaoh's* heart, that is conditionally, if he first hardened his own ; for we find that the Scripture charges this Sin of hard-heartedness upon *Pharaoh* himself, *1 Sam.* 6. 6. So that *Pharaoh* first hardens his heart against God, and after that, God even in Judgment, delivered him up to this hardening, as the effect of his sin and disobedience : for God never changeth the nature of a soft heart into a hard one ; and though it is said by God, *I will harden Pharaoh's heart*, yet God did not do it primarily, or necessarily, as may be seen by the means God used, which tended rather to soften than harden him, though accidentally he did, and that many ways, (*Loveday* p. 178.) by sending that Messenger to him to let *Israel* depart his Land, which was so much against his proud and covetous Interest : If God had been pleased that *Israel* should still have been Slaves to him, we had not heard of *Pharaoh's* Rebellion as we now do.

1st, Thus God was concern'd in hardening *Pharaoh's* heart, as he crost his will by declaring his own.

2dly,

2dly, God accidentally hardened *Pharaoh's* heart, by declaring himself above him in Power; this must needs provoke him, to hear of a *Jehovah*.

3dly, By deferring the full Revenging Power so long as he did, *Eccl.* 8. 11.

4thly, God hardened his heart accidentally, by his condescending to remove his Judgments so soon at his request: and that this Act of God hardened his heart, you have declared in the History; when God had removed this or that Plague, it is said that *Pharaoh* hardened his heart: So that after *Pharaoh* had hardened his heart, and dealt deceitfully six times, *Exod.* 8. 29. then the Lord threatned to pour out all his Plagues upon his heart, he would punish his acquired hardness with judicial hardness, and would withdraw those Influences of his Spirit that should soften him, leave him to the perverseness of his own heart, and to follow his own Counsel to his destruction. Now, though I might largely shew you the invalidity of your Opinion, as it crosseth some principal Attributes of God; God doth not make Decrees contrary to his own Nature, nor simply according to his own Will; but works all things according to the Counsel of his own Will: So that in whatsoever God doth, we are not only to look for Will, but Counsel, Wisdom, and such things as tend to Ends worthy of him; God's Will always follows

follows his Nature. The Apostle saith, 2 *Tim.* 2. 13. God cannot deny himself, yet give me leave to give you two Reasons why I cannot assent to your Opinion, that God of his meer Pleasure did from all Eternity decree to glorify his Sovereignty, in the Eternal Rejection and Damnation of the greatest part of Mankind: I will be short, because I would willingly put an end to this Discourse at this time.

Mar. Pray do, for the time is far spent, the Sun grows low, and my Occasions call me away at this time.

Phil. Then, my first Reason is this, because no Man had a Being from Eternity; nothing having been from Eternity but God: and therefore, in true Propriety of Speech, Men cannot be said to be Reprobated but in time; 'tis true, the Law, or Decree of God, whereby Men come in time to be reprobated, was from Eternity: God from Eternity did decree, that all those that live and die in a State of Impenitency should perish; but this Decree takes hold of Persons in time, when they come to be actually disobedient to the Lord: As the Lord said to *Moses*, *he which sinneth against me, him will I blot out of my Book.* Therefore if nothing be Eternal but God, and if that be a truth, that whatsoever is in God, is God himself; then if God condemned or reprobated any from Eternity, it must be himself; or else we must say, that Man

Man was Co-eternal with God, and so give the Glory and Honour, which is due to God alone, to a poor contemptible Creature.

Mar. But had not Man some kind of Being in God from Eternity, as he was the common Root, or producent Cause of all Men?

Phil. Yea, and as all Men were singly one in him, they were all alike holy, innocent, and free from blame, and so all alike beloved of him; all being yet nothing but himself: Nay, if we consider all Mens State in *Adam*, while he was standing Just and Righteous in that State, none of Mankind could be the Object of God's Hatred, but of his Love; and I hope you will not deny but we were in him, while he stood in a State of Righteousness, as well as when in a State of Sin; and therefore, none reprobated when they never had sinned, nor were capable of sinning; for they could not sin before they had a Being in the Flesh, and man had no being in the Flesh from Eternity: Therefore, &c. So that if God proposed from Eternity to appoint to Everlasting Misery Millions of Men, it must be whilst they were nothing but himself.

My second Reason is, if God from all Eternity of his meer Pleasure, did decree to glorify his Sovereignty in the Eternal Rejection and Damnation of the greatest part of Mankind, and that when they were innocent

cent and harmless (as above) he must of necessity destinate them unto Sin also ; for where there is no Sin, there Punishment cannot justly take place : For if a Man be fore-determined to Damnation, he must unavoidably sin, else he could not be damn'd ; by this you make God the Author of Sin.

Mar. I do not say God is the Author of Sin in any ; yet this I say, God did from Eternity freely, and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass: and if a hair of our Heads falls not to the Ground, or a Sparrow to the Earth, without the Will of God, how can you think, that any Action of Men can come to pass, or be performed, but by the fore-determinate Will of God ? for all things come to pass, according as his Hand and Council had before determined.

Phil. No, 'tis likely you will not be so blunt as to say directly, that God is the cause of Sin, that would spoil all, when stated in its proper Terms ; but I know it is usual with such as you are to put it in a more disguised and specious Phrase, that so you may impose with the more Art upon those that are ready to receive as Gospel what you say : yet when you say that God hath appointed, and unchangeably ordained whatsoever comes to pass, it followeth by necessary consequence that he is the Author of it ; so that there is no Murder, nor Whoredom, Robberies, Blasphemies, or any Rogueries
what-

whatsoever, that fall out in any time or place, but they are all the effect of God Almighty's Decrees. What Dishonour is done to the God of Love by such Doctrines as these, that he should appoint, ordain, and unavoidably decree, to make the greatest part of the World eternally miserable; and that he might accomplish his ends, did necessitate them to do Evil, drawing them on from Sin to Sin, till they had filled up the Measure of their Iniquitys, that so he might inflict upon them that Vengeance which he had provided for them; this is contrary to his revealed Will: *David* saith, *Psal.* 5. 4. *Thou art a God that hath no Pleasure in Wickedness*; and *James* 1. 13, 14. *Let no Man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, for God tempts no Man*; and *John* tells us, that the Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eye, and the Pride of Life, is not of the Father, but of the World: Surely God doth not use to necessitate that which his Soul abhors, and which he not only forbids in his Word, but also is the Condemner of it. Saith one of the Antients, to wit, *Prosper*, (vid. *God's Love to Mankind*, p. 50.) 'Tis against Reason to say, that he that is the Damner of the Devil would have any to be his Servants; what, do you think that God Almighty doth so delight in the Blood and Ruin of Men, that rather than not destroy them Soul and Body, he will have them live and die in Sin, that he
may

may destroy them ? This is like that which *Suetonius* reports of *Tyberius*, (in *God's Love to Mankind*, Page 59.) who being minded to put certain Virgins to death, because it was against the Roman Laws to strangle Virgins, caused them all to be deflowered by the Hangman, that so they might be strangled; but far be any such thing from the God of Truth, and Father of Mercy, that he should appoint that the Devil should lead Men into Sin, that afterward he might take occasion to damn them for it.

Mar. But you ought to distinguish between the Actions of Men, and the Sin of the Action; tho God is the Author of the Actions of Men, yet not of the Evil of their Actions.

Phil. This is a nice Distinction; you would seem to split a Hair. God you say is the Author of the Fact, but not of the Fault of their Disobedience, not of their Sin; but is this any part of God's revealed Will ?

Mar. You read, *Acts* 4. 27, 28. *Of a Truth, Lord, against thy Child Jesus, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the People of Israel were gathered together for to do whatsoever thy Hand and Counsel determined before to be done.* Here you see that it was the determinate Counsel of God, that his Son should not only suffer, but also that *Herod, Pontius Pilate, Jews and Gentiles* should betray and murder him : Now had they done this in Obedience to the Will of God, they
had

had not sinned ; but they doing of it to make him a Sacrifice to their Revenge and Malice, that was their Sin ; here God decreed the Fact, but not the Fault.

Phil. This is no good Distinction : How much better had it been for the World, and what Peace might the Church of God have enjoyed, had People contented themselves with what was spoken to them from the Lord, and had not given their Imagination such unbounded Scope, as to pester the World with such abundance of Scriptureless Distinctions, and frivolous Niceties. Now I readily grant, that it was the determinate Will of God to redeem lost Man, by the delivering up of his Son unto Death ; that is, by leaving him in the Hands, and to the Will of those who were his Enemies, and whom the Lord did foreknow would put him to Death, unless he did interpose by his Power, to prevent their Rage and Malice. Now for the effecting of this great and blessed Work, the Redemption and Salvation of Mankind, it was sufficient for God to decree, that in case these, or any other should attempt his Death, he would not hinder them from effecting it : but neither this Scripture, nor any other saith, that the Hand and Counsel of God had determined, that the Jews and Gentiles should betray and murder Christ ; but only that these were gathered together to effect that which God in his
Counsel

Counsel had determined before to be done, (to wit) the Redemption of the World. Compare this Text with *Act*. 2. 23. where the Apostle plainly lays this Sin upon their own Heads; in that they took, and by wicked Hands crucified and slew the Lord of Life and Glory. *Du-Veil* commenting upon this place, saith,

“ That this Jesus, by the Decree of the Fa-
 “ ther, to whom he in all things voluntari-
 “ ly obeyed, being surrendred into your
 “ Hands, with incredible Importunity you
 “ forced the Romans to nail to a Cross :
 “ — Therefore, Christ by the determinate
 “ Decree of God, was given up into the
 “ power and disposal of his Enemies, whose
 “ hostile and inhuman Rage God did not
 “ predestinate, but only foreknew. Now,
 tho God did decree to leave his Son in the
 Hands of wicked Men, that so he might die
 for Sin; yet it is no less than Wickedness
 and horrid Blasphemy, to say that God de-
 creed, that such and such Men by Name,
 should betray and murder him : Now, to kill
 a holy and innocent Person is a sinful Act,
 which is not from God, but of the Devil,
 who is the Author of it, *John* 8. 40, 43, 44.
 and therefore it is said, *John* 13. 2. that the
 devil put it in *Judas*’s Heart to betray Christ;
 and that *Judas* fell by Transgression, *Act*. 1.
 25. Now if God, who hath by his Word
 prohibited the shedding of Blood, or taking
 of any Man’s Life away unjustly, should any
 way

way incline or compel Men to it, so as to lay them under a Necessity of being wicked, he must needs be the Author of it. Bishop *Usher*, in his History of *Gottschalk*, p 138. as quoted by the Author of *God's Love to Mankind*, hath these Words: "Whosoever
 "saith, that God hath laid a Constraint, or
 "a Necessity of sinning upon any Man, he
 "doth manifestly and fearfully blaspheme
 "God, inasmuch as he makes him by that the
 "Author of Sin; and therefore I look upon your Distinction no better than meer Delusion, to deceive the simple and inconsiderate ones.

First, Because in wicked Actions the Acts themselves are simply Sin; as *Adam's* eating the forbidden Fruit was simply Sin: and is not Murder, Drunkenness, profane Swearing, Stealing, Whoring, in themselves Sin? Is it not because of such things, that the Wrath of God comes upon the Children of Disobedience? *Eph.* 5. 5, 6. The Wrath of God doth not take hold upon Men for such Actions, as bare Actions, but as sinful Actions, as they are the Transgression of the Righteous Law of God, 1 *John* 3. 4. How shall God be just in rendering to every Man according to the things done in the Body, if Men sin by the Determination of God?

Secondly, Because, if God by his divine Decree lays Man under a necessity of sinning, he is truly the cause of Sin, and Man by thi

comes to have some Cloak for his Wickedness, because he cannot justly be blamed nor punished for doing of that which he had no power to withstand, but was forced on by an irresistible Necessity. It was a grave and true Saying, (saith *Goodman* upon the Parable of the Prodigal Son) of *Seneca* ;
 “ Necessity is the great Sanctuary of human
 “ Infirmary, which whosoever can lay claim
 “ to, obtains Protection, for it perfectly ex-
 “ cusethe all the Faults it commits. No Punishment, either Temporal or Eternal can in Justice be inflicted for any bad Action, where there is no power in the Party to avoid it : Why doth our Law condemn Men to suffer Death for wicked Actions, if they were unavoidable ? and that when they murder, steal, plot Treason, or practise any other Villanies, they do them by Necessity of God’s unalterable Decree. Pray see what we have, *Deut.* 22. 25. where we may see the Law of God awards no Punishment to the Damsel, because what she did was by Compulsion, being over-born by force which she was not able to withstand. Nay, farther, if God hath decreed all the Actions of Men, and bound them under the Dominion of absolute Necessity to commit them, why then should we be afraid of any Sin, that is attended with Pleasure or Profit, if they must needs sin ? or what reason has a Person to repent, to weep and mourn for doing that which he
 could

could not but do, or omitting of that which was never in his power to effect? If there be such a rigid Fate upon Persons, all Sorrow, Fear, and mourning for Sin, and all other Acts of Repentance whatsoever, may as well be spared as spent to no purpose.

Mar. Well, but whatsoever cometh to pass at any time, or in any place, with relation to any Persons, they are foreseen and fore-known by the Lord; and if so, is there not then an absolute and unavoidable necessity of their coming to pass? What God foresees must necessarily come to pass; but it must come to pass in the same manner that he foresees it, which is as it shall be in respect of time. But his foresight doth not make it an absolutely necessary thing: for as the knowledg of things present, lays no necessity on that which is done; so the fore-knowledg of things future, lays no necessity on that which shall be; because whosoever either knows, or sees things, he knows and sees them as they are, and not as they are not. God's fore-knowledg of this, or the other Man's Sins from Eternity, doth infer, that these his Sins would be committed; for God cannot be deceived: yet his fore-knowledg that Man would sin, hath no influence upon his Sin, which shews Man's Destruction to be of himself.

Phil. God foreknows all the Evil and Wickedness that was, is, or will be; yet

he doth not decree it : It cannot be thought but God did foreknow that the Jews would mock his Messengers, despise his Word, misuse his Prophets, till his Wrath arose against them, till there was no Remedy ; yet did not he decree it, but sent his Messengers, &c. in true love to them, 2 *Chron.* 36. 15, 16. God Almighty, thro the Infiniteness of his Wisdom and Knowledg, is able infallibly to know and foresee all Mens Ways and Actions, and what they will be from the beginning of the World, to the end thereof, as well, nay, far better than Man doth, when his days are finished ; being without all possibility of Error or Mistake : yet this fore-knowledg of this or the other coming to pass, doth not cause a necessity that it shall so come to pass, no more than my fore-knowledg that Men will die, is a cause of their Death. Without all question, God foreknew that *Herod* would seek the young Child Jesus to destroy him ; and in all probability, had Jesus been in the coast of *Bethlehem* at that time, when *Herod's* bloody Inquisition was put in Execution, Jesus had died ; that the Lord foresaw, and therefore warned *Joseph* to take the young Child and flee into *Egypt*. But very full to our purpose is that in 1 *Sam.* 23. 11, 12. where *David* inquires of the Lord, if *Saul* would come down to *Keilah*, and the Lord said he would come down ; and that the Lords of *Keilah* would

would deliver *David* into *Saul's* Hands, in case he should stay in their City. But it did not follow from this fore-knowledg, that therefore *Saul* must of necessity come down, or *David* be delivered by the Lords of *Keilah* into *Saul's* Hands. “ Predestination, saith “ *St. Austin* (as quoted by *Du-Veil* on *Act.* “ 2.23.) cannot be without Fore-knowledg, “ but Fore-knowledg may be without Pre- “ destination; for by Predestination, God “ foreknew those things he was to act, but “ he may foreknow those things which he “ himself doth not do, as all manner of “ Sin. Where we may see, that tho the Sins and wicked Actions of Men may be the Object of God's Fore-knowledg, yea, and of his Providence too; yet it is Wickedness to say, that God is operative about the bringing of them to pass.

Mar. But if it was not for Sin, God's Glory would not be exalted in the punishing of it; by this is much of the Justice of God seen.

Phil. What, is God so much wanting in himself, that he could find out no means for the Exaltation of his own glorious Name, nor find out means to advance his Justice, but by the bringing in of Sin into the World, which his Soul hates, and to appoint Men to commit it, that so he might exalt his Justice in punishing of it? Surely if our Righteousness cannot profit God, our Sins cannot,

Job 35. 6, 7. But a Word with respect to the term Fore-knowledg, which the Scripture in several places attributes unto God, tho held by Learned and good Christians to be an unproper Term, and attributed to God, as the Parts and Passions of a Man are; as Hands, Eyes, Ears, Grief, Joy, Repentance, Anger, &c. And the Holy Ghost is pleased to use such vulgar Terms, applying himself to our Capacity, that so we might receive some Light of God's Eternal Workings, and might be enriched with such Conceptions and Knowledg of him as we are capable of. Now with respect to us that are temporal, we say, that God Almighty doth foresee, and foreknow us, and predestinate us; yet we must not think, that God's Actions, that are Eternal, must be wrought like ours in time. This was to raise such Fancies in us, which are unworthy of him, and not consistent with the truth of his Being: for this is adjudg'd for a Truth by the Learned, that God wills nothing in time. Mr. *Perkins*, in his Commentary upon *Heb.* 11. 40. speaking of God's Fore-knowledg, saith, That to foresee, is ascribed to God, not properly, but in regard of our Capacity; for if we speak of God properly, God cannot be said to foresee any thing; because all things be present to him, whether past, or to come. Dr. *Moulins*, upon *Rom.* 8. as quoted by *De-Laun*, in his *Sec. Philo.* page 70. God is said to fore-know such which he foresaw would believe in his

his Son; not that there is any future time properly ascribable to God, in whom no Acci-Condition, or Circumstance of Time or Place can be admitted; but these things are spoken of God, after the manner of Men. Now, if God wills nothing in time, neither doth he foreknow, or foresee any thing in time; his Fore-knowledg being as Antient as himself, even from Eternity: so that with God, there is no Word nor Thought, nor Actions, past or to come, but are all at once with God, even in one eternal present Being, *Psal. 139. 2.* yea, our Birth, our Lives, our Death, our Election and Predestination, *Acts 15. 18.* are all at once with God, *with whom is no variableness or shadow of changing, Heb. 13. 8. Rev. 1. 4. Jesus Christ, the same Yesterday, to Day, and for ever;* always like himself, invariable and immutable; so that whatsoever God foreknows or intends, 'tis from Eternity. May we not say with the Apostle, *Rom. 11. 33.* that the Knowledg as well as the Wisdom of God, *is past finding out;* yea, unsearchable to Men and Angels, in respect of that absolute and perfect Knowledg which God hath of all things, and of the Ways and Actions of Men? *Psal. 139.* Let us then here learn to become Fools, that we may be wise, and leave prying into those things, which are beyond our human Reason to conceive, and let us keep close to God's revealed Will, which is our Duty; for the want of this hath fil-

led Professors Heads with Fancies, and so they have been smiting one another, and weakning the Hands of each others in the Lords Work, while Piety, Virtue, the Love and Fear of God, the true Spiritual Substance of all Religion is too too much neglected. So that what if God did foreknow all the wicked Actions of Men before they came to pass, yet might not God as well foreknow, that if they had but improved those Means which he through his Grace had afforded them, they might not have come to pass? for the fore-knowledg in God of what Men will do, doth not imply any absolute necessity of their doing of it; neither have they any less Power to refrain doing of it, because of God's fore-knowing that they will do it. Whilst it remained, saith *Peter* to *Ananias* touching his Possession, was it not thy own? *i. e.* wert thou not at full liberty to have kept it for thy own private use? and when it was sold, was it not in thy Power, *viz.* whether thou wouldst part with thy Money or not? Doubtless, God foreknew what *Ananias* would do; yet this did not take away the Liberty or Freedom of his Will, to dispose of it as he pleased; otherwise God's Fore-knowledg should necessitate him to sell the Possession, and to keep back part of the Money, and lie against the Holy Ghost, by saying, *there was all*, when there was not: this Act must be looked upon, not the Act of *Ananias*, but of God himself: for whatsoever

ever a Man is necessitated to do by an irresistible Power out of himself, is the Act of the Necessitator, not his: As the Apostle saith, *Rom. 7. 20. If I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but Sin that dwells in me.* I would not have you admit into your thoughts, that God is any ways Author of the wicked Actions of Men, or that he decrees any thing that is an Infringement to his Justice, or his Mercy in the least.

Mar. I am against those that hold that God works Sin by an operative Decree; as *Mr. Perkins* in his Commentary upon *Heb. 11. 40.* who saith, that under the large extent of God's Decree, we must include the sinful Actions of Men; for God doth not barely foresee them, but decrees the being of them, and so wills them after a sort, tho not to be done by himself, yet by others. And so upon *Jude, ver. 4.* that nothing comes to pass without the Decree of God; no not the wicked Actions of Men, which God not only foreseeth, but decreeth. Now it is true which you have said, if God should be operative in the working of Sin, then he would be the Author of Sin: yet that all Sin comes to pass by the permissive decree of God, is a thing I hope you will not deny.

Phil. I see you can play fast and loose with your Opinion; sometimes you say that God did from Eternity freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass; and when by this Doctrine you find that Man is laid under

der a necessity of sinning, and consequently God becomes the Author of all the wicked Actions of Men, then you would help your self, by saying, Though Man sin not by the operative decree of God, yet he doth by the permissive decree. This is no more indeed, than what we find and hear in the Sermons of all those of your way; when they preach on this Subject, the Doctrinal part of their Sermons countenance one thing, and the Applicatory part that which is contrary unto it; labouring to beget such a Faith in their Auditors, as would destroy the Faith of their Doctrine. What wooing and beseeching doth your Ministers make for Sinners to close with Christ, to repent, believe, and obey the Lord, and not to withstand the Day of Grace? when yet notwithstanding all this, they believe there is no Grace nor Mercy, but for very few before them; and that their strongest Endeavours to repent, &c. effect just nothing, but the over-ruling Decree of God doth all; and so they pull down with one hand, what they build up with the other. And the Truth is, this Doctrine of God's eternal decreeing the greatest part of *Adam's* Offspring to Sin and Damnation, includes in it so many Absurdities, horrible Blasphemies, undermining the very Foundation of all Religion and Piety, that my Hopes are, that it will shortly fall, with the unsupportable weight of its own Evil. Yea, were
it

it not for so many Volumes written to uphold it, I should hope it would appear so wicked, that all good Christians e're long would be ashamed to own it; and God's Love to all would be exalted in the Hearts, Tongues, and Writings of all Men. One thing I perceive is the cause why this Doctrine doth so flourish and lift up its Head in this Day, is an over-much confiding in Persons, of whose Learning and Piety they have had a high Opinion. This draws many ignorant, tho well-meaning Hearers, to be zealous in what they teach, be it right or wrong, and to follow Persons, reputed Godly and Learned, more than the pure unerring Word of God: Alas! all good and pious Men have Errors and Fits of Distempers, thro human Frailty; and we ought not to take their Words upon trust, but upon trial, and in those things that appertain to Salvation, bring them to the Law and Testimony; and to suspect that for Truth, where the Word of God administers much more Ground to doubt and question than believe, as this Doctrine of personal and respective Reprobation doth.

But a word to the permissive Decree of God. If by the permissive Decree of God, you mean that God permitting, or suffering such, or such a thing to be done, or come to pass, supposeth a necessity of the coming of it to pass: This I deny; for if it be true, that a Sparrow falls not to the Ground without

out his Permission, yet hath not he decreed eternally, that it shall be at such or such a time, or in any cruel way, as it often falls out directly contrary to his Will, *Deut.* 22. 6. and though it be a Truth, God hath decreed to suffer Sin, otherwise there could be none; yet it is also a great Truth, that this permissive Decree of God is no cause of Sin. God doth permit one Man to take away the Life of another; but it doth not follow, that therefore he did appoint, or ordain them to such wicked Actions: No Decree of God, that is purely, and barely permissive, either induceth, or supposeth any necessity of the coming to pass what is so decreed; no more than a Capital Law necessitates to Murder: Permission supposeth a Possibility of sinning, or not sinning, in the Party permitted. From whence I conclude, there is no damning to Misery, without relation to Sin; for it is Sin, as Sin, and in no other Consideration, is the Cause of Punishment; and surely, God being most pure, perfect, and Goodness it self, cannot be a Cause, either Moral or Physicall, of that which is nothing but Deficiency. If any of us miss Happiness, let us not foolishly and sawcily charge God with our Ruin, who delights not in it, but rather upon our selves. And I pray take heed, while you dislike Mr. Perkins's Phrase, you hold not to his Opinion; for then would you make God worse
than

than the Devil, because the Devil doth only tempt and perswade to Sin, and his Motions may be resisted ; for it is granted on all Hands, the Devil can but allure, not compel to Sin. But by this Opinion, God doth not only will Sin, but procure it by a powerful and effectual Decree : This is not only contrary to God's revealed Will, but also fighteth against all the Attributes of God, which I might largely shew. Surely 'tis Mens wilful sinning, which renders every Cast-away liable to Reprobation, and no fore-determination of God necessitates him thereunto ; as you may see, *Psal.* 81. 11, 12. *Ezek.* 18. 39. *Rom.* 1. 21, 24. *Rev.* 22. 11. Those that are here left to themselves, are the obstinate and wilful Sinners, which hate Instruction, and scorn Mercy, *Prov.* 1. 24. And saith *Hockins*, on *God's Decree*, p. 44. “ All
 “ Men do by their Sins and Iniquities truly reprobate themselves ; so that eternal
 “ Destruction becomes Mens choice, not their
 “ unhappy Destiny ; and our Misery, derive its Original, not from God, but our
 “ own Wills : so that we need not seek for
 “ any hidden Cause, but our own secret
 “ and open Impieties. And indeed for my part, I cannot find that God hath necessitated any to be wicked, and thereby justly miserable ; but hath graciously provided Means, whereby both Sin and Misery might be prevented or removed, if timely imbraced.

ced. But I shall say no more at this time, for I see it grows late ; but I could heartily wish we might have a little farther Discourse together, so it may be in Love.

Mar. Well, I agree to it ; and if you please, appoint the Time and Place, and if the Lord will, I'll meet you ; and if we cannot agree in our Judgments, yet I desire we may maintain the bond of Love, which will make part of amends for our Failings : But I do not question but you will be of my mind before you die, and renounce this your Error.

Phil. My Friend, I stand ready to revoke any Error that I shall be made sensible of, and be convinced by the written Word of God, the Touchstone of all Mens sayings and doings ; and if I err, I err with a good Intention, as in Charity I hope you do : tho in my Apprehension, what you hold tends more to the dishonour of God than his honour. And I heartily pray, and hope you will be ashamed and sorry for it upon further Consideration ; and I rest hopeful, that all those that have been led into this Error by Ignorance, or too much trusting in Human Wisdom, if they be not ashamed to revoke their Judgment before Men of their own Parties, will better consider what they ought to believe, in relation to these things. And seeing you are so kind to accept my Motion, if you please, let it be to Morrow about Noon ; and
let

let this shady Grove be the place.

Mar. Let it be so, till then farewell.

Phil. A good Night to you.

A Second Conference.

Philad. **W**ELL met *Martha*, now I see you are as good as your Word.

Mar. Nay, I think I am better than my Word, for I am not only come my self, but I have brought one or two with me.

Philetus. This is a very pleasant Walk, and a curious Shade indeed.

Moderatus. It is so.

Philad. Why, here I love to retire my self sometimes, and to get out of the Noise and Hurry of the World, which too much interrupts us in our Contemplation on Divine Things; yea, here all alone, I can take a view of the Corruption of my Heart, and the Errors of my Life, and see the Vanity and Uncertainty of all created Things: And here in my Walkings and Musings, methinks all the Herbs in the Field, the Beasts on the Earth, the Birds of the Air, preach forth the wonderful Love, Wisdom and Providence of God; and many other things are represented to my Thoughts, in this my Solitary Walking: but I will not prevent

vent our Discourse for which we met this Day, &c.

Mar. I have imparted to these two Friends of mine the Substance of our Discourse Yesterday, and they are desirous to spend this Afternoon with you, I hope in true Love and Compassion, as Friends and Lovers of the Truth of God, and your Souls good ; knowing that if you should remain settled upon the Dregs of any rotten Opinion, contrary to the Truth of the everliving God, that Sorrow, Shame, and Confusion of Face will be your Portion ; for there are damning Principles, as well as damning Practices.

Philad. I do with a Cordial Affection readily imbrace you all, and also believe that there are Principles which are of a Grace-destroying, Heart-hardning Nature, that tend to banish the true Fear and Love of God, and to nourish Carnal Security, and beget Strife ; but if all those engaged in Religious Contests, would leave off advancing Parties and Opinions, and aim with a single Eye, and sincere Heart, to advance Truth and Piety, with Sobriety and Christian Prudence, this would renew that brotherly Love and Peace, which is now almost universally destroyed by imprudent Zeal, to the hazarding of all true Piety, and indeed Morality and all.

Mod. You say true ; 'tis a great deal of pity, that Persons that own one God and one Lord

Lord Jesus Christ, and expect one Heaven, should be so injurious to each other, as to put off that Spirit of Gentleness and Meekness, which doth so highly become the Saints of Jesus Christ.

Philet. It would be well if all sorts of Christians would endeavour patiently to bear, or mildly instruct those that lye under Errors and Failings ; this would maintain and cherish Peace and Concord in all the Churches of Christ.

Mod. Well then, in this Days Discourse, let it be accompanied with love to Truth, and in love to Peace, and the good of each others Souls ; and let all things be tryed by the true Standard, the Word of God : and wherein you find each other mistaken, take heed of passing heady or hasty Censures upon each other ; as because I am not of your Mind, nor you of mine, that therefore we are excluded out of the Kingdom of Heaven : this will make us out of love with one another.

Philad. I have found it too true, that many that can speak fair, yet carry Wrath in their Hearts, neither can they bear the least Opposition that may be, but presently they carry it so, as if God himself was opposed, when their Dictates are not admitted for Divine Oracles ; and because I cannot see that to be a Truth, which I believe is an Error, presently they are ready to say, I

cannot see it, because God hath purposely blinded my Eyes, and am such a one as is cast out of the Love and Favour of God ; and when this is once settled in their Hearts, how can I expect Love from them , unless I can believe they can be better to me, than they represent God to be to the greatest part of Mankind?

Mar. I see that which is uppermost will out ; you still are of the same mind you was, you hold fast your Error, and will not let it go.

Philad. Truly I am much of *Rawlin* the Martyr's Mind ; when the Bishop, after he had read Mafs, ask'd him if he would revoke his Opinion; answered, my Lord, *Rawlin* you left me, and *Rawlin* you find me, and by God's Grace *Rawlin* I will continue ; and tho I may seem to you to err, yet I have considered every Particular, and it seemeth so pleasing an Error, if it be one, and so comfortable a Doctrine to poor Mankind, and doth so much exalt the Justice and Mercy of God, that I think I shall never be of a contrary Mind. Yea, and if for any thing in the World I could suffer the Loss of all that's dear to me, methinks it should be to witness to this great Truth.

Mar. I know that natural Reason seems to stand on your side ; but you must know, and allow Faith to be above Reason, and God may have, and questionless hath Ways and Actions,

ons, which are known only to himself, past finding out by Man; neither doth he give an Account or Reason of any of his Matters, *Job* 33. 13. You must have a care of searching into God's Decrees, they are not to be fathomed by Man's weak and shallow Capacities: what Eye looks upon the Sun, doth not by that dazle? So, while Men would by the Eye of Reason see a Cause in God's secret Will, they stumble and fall. Pray ye, what Reason can be given concerning the Mystery of the Trinity? or that the second Person should take our Flesh upon him, and be conceived of a Virgin? or that the same Bodies, after dissolved to Dust, should be restored to a Spiritual, Immortal, and Incorruptible State? These things are the object of Faith, and are above our Reason to comprehend or define; yet are we to believe these things to be Truth, because revealed to us by God in his Word: So, tho it be beyond the Reason of Man to define how God (whose Ways are all equal and just) should from Eternity predestinate the greatest part of *Adam's* Offspring to Everlasting Misery, or freely and unchangeably ordain the coming to pass of every thing in the World; and yet he himself, neither guilty of Cruelty, or the Author of Sin; yet we ought to believe it is so, when declared to us by the Word of the Lord.

Mod. These are great Mysteries which we ought not to pry into : Secret things belong unto God, but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our Children, *Deut.* 29. 29.

Philad. This is true ; but surely *Moderatus*,
 “ This wretched Opinion of God’s positive
 “ Reprobation doth not carry the Nature of
 “ Divine Mysteries along with it : It is not
 “ accompanied with so great Awe and Ma-
 “ jesty, as that it should be only obeyed,
 “ and no way disputed : For God himself
 “ denies it to be any Decree of his, *Ezek.*
 33. 11. And as *Calvin* saith, “ We should
 “ not be ashamed to be ignorant of some of
 “ the Nature of Divine Predestination :
 Yet as *Eusebius* saith, “ ’Tis an Argument of
 “ great Sloth and Idleness not to seek unto
 “ that, whereof we may justly make in-
 “ quiry. *Hockins* on God’s Decrees, *Page*
 126, 190. Now I do not pretend to draw
 the Curtain to look into the wonderful and
 astonishing Mystery of the Holy and Blessed
 Trinity, or of the Incarnation of the Son
 of God, God manifest in the Flesh, *1 Tim.* 3. 16.
 which is so great a Mystery, that infirm Man
 with all the strongest Faculties of his Soul
 cannot reach unto. I also freely grant, that
 whatsoever God hath revealed in his Word,
 must needs be a Truth, and meet and worthy
 to be believed of us all : But where do you
 find, that God hath revealed in his Word,
 that

that he hath appointed the greatest part of the World to Everlasting Misery? and tho there may be many things above Reason quite out of the Apprehension of it, yet not altogether against Reason. How is it contrary to Reason, that God the first Being of all things, being Infinite, should have a manner of subsisting far different from all created and finite Beings? Neither is it contrary to Reason, that God should be able to make a Virgin to conceive in a way beyond the Course of Nature, or ordinary Providence, for the accomplishing of so great and glorious a Work, as the saving poor lost and undone Mankind. Neither ought it to be look'd upon, no, not in the Eye of Reason, as a thing incredible, that God should raise the Dead, *Act. 16. 8.* Is it not every way as easy for God to restore a Body dissolved to Dust, and give a Perfection and Glory to it, as to restore a dry Hand to Life and Activity in the Body, or cause *Aaron's* dry Staff to blossom and bare Almonds? Can Man burn a Tree into Ashes, and change it into shining Glass? And cannot God cause that Dust that was once Flesh, to become Flesh again, and to restore it to a Spiritual, Immortal, and Incorruptible State? But to let this pass; are these Friends of yours, to whom you say you have imparted the Substance of our Discourse, &c. of your Mind?

Mod. There is some Difference, for what I hold you have heard : But *Philetus* looks upon Mankind as lying in the Fall, under the Guilt of *Adam's* Sin ; so that God looking upon Man as fallen, did decree the greatest Number of Men to Eternal Misery, for the Declaration of his Justice, without affording them a Saviour ; which is the only Way and Means of their Recovery, or without sufficient Grace for the avoiding of Sin.

Philad. Truly, I see little difference between you ; you both place the Sin and Damnation of the greatest part of Mankind upon the alone absolute Will and Pleasure of God, you looking upon it from Eternity, he as lying in the Fall. But surely God never left any Man in that State whereunto *Adam* brought him ; but as I have said, hath graciously provided means whereby both Sin and Misery might be prevented, or removed, if timely embraced, seeing Christ hath abolished that Wrath and Death, and hath brought Life and Immortality to light by the Gospel ; and God hath so far reconciled all Sinners to himself, that thro the Sacrifice, and for the sake of that Lamb of God that takes away the Sins of the World, he is graciously pleased to be reconciled to them, and to open a Door of Hope for all the Sons of *Adam*. And tho it is a great Truth that *Adam*, in breaking the Law of his God, brought not only himself, but

but all his Posterity (if he should have had any) under Sentence of Death and Condemnation; yet did the Lord, who delights in Mercy, before he pronounc'd the Sentence due to him for Sin, graciously promise a Saviour, *Gen. 3. 15.* by which he was put into a state of Recovery from this dreadful Fall: And God by this gracious Promise took whole *Adam* into Grace and Favour. And you can no more exclude any from Justification of Life, which hath abounded towards all by Christ, than you can exclude them from the Condemnation, which hath abounded towards them by *Adam*. *Rom. 5. 16, 17, 18, 19.* Here the condemned Ones by *Adam*, and the justified of Christ, are computed by one and the same Number: For as we hear of the Condemnation of all Men by the Offence of *Adam*, so of no fewer than all Men justified by Christ, and no more than many made Sinners by *Adam*, or of any fewer than many made Righteous by Christ.

Mar. Let it be well observed, that the Scope of the Apostle in this place, is to shew, that as Death and Condemnation came inevitably upon all the first *Adam's* Posterity, by his Fall; so shall the free Gift of Righteousness come infallibly upon all, in whose room and stead Christ died, as their Second *Adam*, their Surety and Mediator: the first *Adam's* All was all Mankind, the second *Adam's* All was the Elect, upon which Justification

and Sanctification shall most certainly and infallibly be bestowed upon them.

Philad. But why the All in the first Clause should be taken for all Mankind, without excepting so much as one, and All in the latter should exclude all Men, a few only excepted, I know not. For unless Persons will take to themselves a lawless Liberty, to exercise Dominion over the Expression of the Holy Ghost, they cannot make them greater or lesser in one Clause than in the other: for if Condemnation should come upon all Men by the offence of *Adam*, and Righteousness only upon some few by the Obedience of Christ; then where Sin abounded, Grace should not super-abound, as *Verse 20.* unless Grace hath a proportionable Reign unto Life, (so as to put all Men into a Capacity of Life and Salvation) as Sin reigned over all Men without exception unto Death.

Philet. The Apostle's Scope is to shew, that as Death came in by one publick Person, so Life and Salvation came in by another publick Person; and that the Lord Jesus will infallibly justify and save his All, for whom he undertook, and died as their Head and Representative.

Philad. But it seems you will not own, that the Grace of Christ did profit Mankind, as much as the Sin of *Adam* damnified it: No, you make Christ less than *Adam*; and that *Adam* did more to the damning of the Souls

Souls and Bodies of all his Posterity, than Christ did for the saving of them ; if so, what will become of *Paul's* glorying over the Grace of God in Christ, as much more abounding ? as in *Verse 15*. For if thro the offence of one, many be dead, much more the Grace of God, and the Gift by Grace, which is by one Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. But now if many more Millions of Men are dead, thro the offence of *Adam*, than are made alive by the Grace of God in Christ, where's the *much more* ?

Philet. All Men being fallen in *Adam*, God beholding Mankind in the corrupt Mass (and he being the Sovereign Lord of all) might at his Pleasure, and in his electing Love, pardon one, or a few of fallen Mankind ; and by an eternal Decree of Reprobation, leave the greatest part of Mankind in that sad and depraved Condition, without any Power to believe, or a Christ to believe in ; and this he might do, because he hath an absolute and uncontrollable Power, and Dominion over his Creatures.

Philad. Now you run upon a Fundamental Mistake, about personal and absolute Election and Reprobation : You make *Adam's* Sin the Foundation of building your fearful Opinion upon ; that Man suffers Eternal Damnation for *Adam's* Sin. This is a most sad Doctrine, that God should lay men under a necessity of being born under
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the Guilt of that Sin, which was out of their Power to help or withstand, (for men can no more help *Adam's* Sin, than they could help being born) and yet for that, cast away the greatest part of Mankind forever; Shall one Man sin, and will the Lord be wrath with all? *Num. 16. 22.* 'Tis true, when Man by disobedience became Bankrupt of the Divine Bounty, and had run himself so far in Debt, both to the Law and Justice, beyond any possibility to pay the Debt, the Lord in Justice might have left him in the Fall, and made him Partaker of his fierce Wrath: Yet was the Lord pleased to break forth in high and much Mercy, and in the tenderness of his Love, deeply compassionating Man's Misery, entered into a Covenant of Peace, freely giving his only Son to satisfy the whole Debt, and set us free; (for which we are obliged to be unfeignedly thankful to our dear Lord, and truly to love him that first loved us) and hath promised, that whosoever believes in him shall not perish, but have Everlasting Life. God hath now tied himself by promise, and hath firmly indented with us in the Covenant of Grace and Mercy, through Christ, that if we believe and obey the Lord, we shall undoubtedly reap the blessed Fruits of the Promise in Eternal Life. Therefore I beseech you, do not entertain such dreadful Apprehensions of an Infinite Gra-

Gracious God, that he should send Millions of Men to endless torments for *Adam's* single Transgression. Surely, if it was so, the Holy Ghost, who so effectually in the Scriptures of Truth vindicates the Righteousness and Equity of God's Proceedings in the Condemnation of wicked and ungodly Men, would have insisted more or less upon it ; we should find something of it in the Word of God, either from Christ, or some of his Servants ; but I cannot find the least hint of it in the whole Scripture, that ever the Lord decreed to assign Men their Portions with Devils for that Sin, it being taken away (as to the condemning Guilt of it) by the Grace of God in Christ. Where doth the Scripture say, that for *Adam's* Sin in eating the forbidden Fruit, God hateth the greatest part of his Posterity ? yea, so hates them, as to reprobate them to the second Death ? but plainly tells us, the Child shall not suffer for the Father's Sins, *Ezek. 18.*

Philet. But doth not the Lord say, *Exod. 20. 5.* That *he will visit the Sins of the Father upon the Children, &c.*

Philad. Yea, but 'tis to those that hate him ; mind the words, If Children come to be haters of God, as their Fathers were, treading in the same steps of sin and disobedience with their wicked Parents, they thereby becoming partakers of their sins, shall share with them in their punishment : But this

this doth not shew that God will condemn any for that offence which they never did in their own persons, especially when satisfied for it by their Surety. And as Dr. *Taylor* saith in his *Apology for the Baptists*, speaking of Infants dying before baptized, and under the supposed guilt of *Adam's* sin, tells us, " That original sin, either will not be laid " to their charge, so as to be sufficient to " condemn them; or if it could, yet the " Mercy and absolute Goodness of God will " secure them, if he takes them away before they can glorifie him by a free " obedience. As Infants without any consent of their own, contracted the guilt of *Adam's* sin, and are liable to all the punishment that can with Justice descend upon his posterity, who are personally innocent; so Infants shall be restored without any Act of their own, or any others for them, by the second *Adam*, by the Redemption of Jesus Christ, by his Righteousness and Mercy.

Mod. I have a good Opinion of all dying Infants, especially Children of Believing Parents.

Philad. And is there not as good ground of hopes for all, as some? Doth not Mr. *Baxter*, a Friend of yours, tell us, in his *Moral Proofs*, pag. 8. " That all Mankind was " brought by Christ under a Covenant of " Grace, which is not vain, nor repealed " by God, but as the abuse of the Grace " of

“ of the Covenant may cast them out ; for
 “ as a Covenant of intire Nature was made
 “ with all Mankind in innocent *Adam*, so
 “ a Covenant of Grace was made with all
 “ Mankind in lapsed *Adam*, *Gen. 3. 15.* in
 “ the Promised Seed ; and renewed again
 “ with all Mankind in *Noah*. And this is no
 more than what the Scripture agrees with,
Ezek. 18. where the Lord expresly tells them,
 That *he that sinneth shall die* ; that the Son
 shall not bear the iniquity of the Father : and
 God’s dealing thus in Mercy with fallen Man-
 kind, is so agreeable to the pure Nature of
 the Deity, that it is to be wondred, that any
 should be so wicked, as to believe that he
 hath fore-determined the Reprobation of any
 for anothers faults, and when they themselves
 were uncapable of doing good or evil, in
 their own persons.

Philer. What will you go about to deny O-
 riginal sin ? Shall none go to Hell ? For that
David saith, *Pf. 51.* That *he was born in ini-*
quity, and in sin did his Mother conceive him.

Philad. Deny Original sin, no ; but I do
 believe that all have sinned, and come short
 of the Glory of God, and that by reason
 of *Adam’s* sin, Death reigneth over all, of
 which none is free, being all concluded in
 unbelief, and corrupted in the original.
Adam, when he was first created, was said
 to be made in the Image of God ; which
 Image did not only stand in having Domini-
 on

on over the Creatures, as some of the Ancients have expounded it, neither as if the Soul was of the substance of God ; but the Image of God, in which *Adam* was created, was in Knowledg, Righteousness and Holiness, *Col. 3. 10. Eph. 4. 14.* indued with all Perfection which was requisite for a Creature, and sufficiently furnished with necessary Wisdom, Mercy, Justice, Patience, Bounty, Love, Humility, and such like ; that so they might, in some measure, hold forth the Divine Perfection and Majesty of God, and know how to use aright their Dominion and Sovereignty over all the inferior Creatures ; and also might understand the Will of God towards themselves, that so they might render that Obedience which was due unto God, as their supreme Lord and Lawgiver, whereby they might have been forever happy and blessed. But now Man being tempted to sin, soon yielded to the temptation, lost the Perfection of his Nature, his Holiness, and pure Innocence, which was the condition of his Blessedness ; in dissolving of which he lost his Happiness, and was driven out from the presence of the Lord, being now fallen from a most glorious condition in Creation, unto the miserable state of Corruption ; in which State of Corruption it is said, *Gen. 5. 3.* That *Adam* begot a Child in his own likeness ; it doth not say that he begat a Son in the Image of God
(in

(in which he was created) but in the Image of himself, that is in the same condition of himself, at that time of Generation. Had *Adam* begotten Children before he fell, he had begotten a Righteous Seed, after the Image of his Perfection, because the Image of God in him was unpolluted; but begetting Children after the Depravation of his Nature, the Stream could not rise purer than the Fountain; none could bring a clean thing out of an unclean one. And though all, with respect of what was derived unto them from *Adam*, are wholly lost, and in the strictness of Justice worthy of eternal Death, yet the guilt of it (as to eternal Death) is taken away by the abounding Grace of God, vouchsafed to the World by Jesus Christ; which extends it self to all that were lost in *Adam*.

Philet. You seem to hold that *Adam's* sin became ours, and we all involved in the Fall, because we were all in his Loins, as he was the Root and common Stock from which we all, by the appointment of the Lord, should come; yet you will not hold that any deserves Hell and Damnation for that sin.

Philad. You cannot prove that that Death which was threatened to *Adam*, if he disobeyed the Lord, was Damnation to Hell-fire; neither if the Promise of Christ had not been made, whether *Adam* had lived to beget Children or not, or whether he had not
imme-

immediately gone to the dust, from whence he was taken. 'Tis no better than sinful curiosity, to be too confident in such unrevealed matters: 'tis the safest way to be sober, and to go no farther than the Scriptures guide us; and where the Holy Ghost hath not a Pen to write, let us not have a Tongue to speak: God hath revealed enough to make us wise to Salvation. Yet this I say, that whatsoever State *Adam* was in, there was all Mankind with him, there was a time (if Eternity may be called so) when all Men considered as in God, were nothing but God himself; according to that Maxim, *Whatsoever is in God, is God.* All Men had a being in God, before they had a being in *Adam*, *Luk. 3: 38.* where *Adam* is called the Son of God.

2dly. There was a time, when *Adam*, and so all Men in him, was righteous and holy, as during his State of pure Innocency. In which State all Men must needs partake of the same Holiness and Integrity with him, *Eccl. 7. 3. Rom. 5. 12. 1 Cor. 15. 22.*

3dly. There was a time when *Adam*, with *Eve* his Wife, being beguiled by Satan (free from all inward or outward Necessity) sinned against God: by which Transgression they became liable to Eternal Death; and so his Judgment, Will and Affection, came to be corrupted: in which State all Mankind stood, and so Original Sin is come upon all, and Death by Sin, yea, upon

on those that have not sinned after the Similitude of *Adam's* Transgression.

4thly. There was a time when God, who is rich in Mercy, of his Free Grace, (*Isa.* 43. 25. *Jer.* 31. 3. *Hos.* 14. 4. *Rom.* 5. 8, 9. *Eph.* 1. 5, 6. 1 *John* 4. 10.) did enter into a Covenant of Grace with *Adam*, and all Mankind in him, in the promised Seed, *Gen.* 3. 15. in which he took all Men to Grace and Favour: for surely we were as much in *Adam* when he was restored, as when he fell, and as much Partakers of his Mercy from God, as we were of his Sins. And I suppose you will not say, but God pardoned this Sin in *Adam*, upon the account of Christ; and if he pardon him, who freely acted it in his own Person, do you think he will send others to Hell for it? God forbid.

Philet. How then must Justice be satisfied?

Philad. Have not I told you often, that it was by Christ?

He poor was made, that he our Debts might pay;
He base became, to take our Shame away.
He entred Bond, our Freedom to procure;
He Dangers try'd, our Safeties to assure.
He scorned was, our Honour to advance;
He seem'd a Fool, to help our Ignorance.
He Sin was made, our Errours to conceal;
He wounded was, that he our Minds might heal.
He thirsted, that our Thirst might have an end;
He wept, that Joy our Sorrow might attend.

*He lost his Blood, that we our Blood might save ;
He died, that we Eternal Life might have.*

Here is the Lamb of God, that hath taken away the damning Guilt of *Adam's Sin*.

Philet. But doth not the Apostle positively say, *Eph. 2. 3.* that we are all *by Nature the Children of Wrath*, by Nature, that is, by our Nativity or Birth ?

Philad. What ; did not Christ take away the original Guilt from none ? What, the *Elect* which were taken into the Love and Favour of God before the Foundation of the World, yet Children of Wrath by Birth ? What, did not Christ take it away from them ?

Pray take heed you charge not the human Nature with a Sin, where God hath not, under pretence of doing him the greater Honour thereby, tho in the main, it layeth to the Lord's charge the chief Cause of all Evils. Surely by Nature here, cannot be meant our Descent from *Adam*, by partaking of the human Nature. For where do you find, that the Wrath of God is entailed upon *Adam's* Posterity, as they are Men ? but as they are vicious and sinful, *Eph. 5. 6.* by reason of their actual Sins, *comes the Wrath of God upon the Children of Disobedience*. You never find the Judgments of God threatned to any for *Adam's Sin*, nor against the human Nature,

ture, as if the very Essence and Being of a Man was the Object of God's Reprobation. Now, as our National Laws lay no Penalty upon a Child that is gotten in Adultery, because it partakes of the Nature of a Man, (in this case, the Child is by all acquitted as innocent, not worthy of any Punishment ; it being a thing quite out of its Power to help, and so quite out of the reach of Penal Laws, which are inflicted upon those that are Criminals :) and so it is in Divine. I will give you three Reasons why I cannot take this Scripture in your sense.

1st. Because we do not find, that the word *Nature* in Scripture, signifies Conception, or natural Birth ; neither is it mentioned as a thing that is sinful in it self in being born.

2dly. If by *Nature* be meant our Descent from *Adam*, and by *Wrath* be meant to be so under the Displeasure of God, as to deserve Hell, notwithstanding what Christ hath done for them, then I cannot see, but all dying Infants must perish eternally ; for they cannot be born again by Faith in Christ, and yet they must have Salvation by him, or not at all ; and how they should have it by him, but as he was the Lamb of God that taketh away the Sin of the World, I do not know : for surely Christ hath brought a greater Advantage to human Nature, than the Loss it sustained by *Adam's* Sin.

3dly. If Nature was so vile a thing as you would have it, Christ would never have taken our Nature upon him, for he was in all Points like unto us, Sin only excepted. Now, if all that are conceived and born, be by their Birth, Children of Wrath; then, why was not Christ under it also, for his Flesh was the same with ours?

Philet. But he was conceived by the Power of the Holy Ghost in a wonderful manner, without the help of Man: had he taken Flesh by a carnal Generation, he had been polluted with Sin as well as others.

Philad. What, tho he was formed in the Womb of the Virgin, so as to be without carnal Generation; yet it was not without her Conception, *Luk* 1. 31. I hope I need not tell you how dangerous it is to believe, that Christ passed through the Virgin, as Water through a Spout, without partaking of her Substance. But surely he took Flesh, not only in, but of the Virgin; and was as really *David's* Son and his Offspring, as he was *David's* Root and *David's* Lord. So that I think it's no more Sin in us in being conceived and born of our Mothers Substance, than it was for Christ to be formed of his Mother's Substance. And I suppose, that what was *Adam's* personal Sin, was not the Affection of an universal Nature; nor can you prove there was the consent of human Nature to it, but meerly of *Adam*. Now, where

where there is no consent or acting, there could be no Transgression ; Transgression is the Breach of a Law, of which Nature may not be guilty, when Persons are.

Philet. But *Adam's* Sin became ours, because we were then all in his Loins, and he was the common Root or Stock, from which we all should come ; so that hereby we came to be included and involved in the Sin of *Adam*.

Philad Why then are we not guilty of all other Sins which *Adam* committed after, as well as the first ? yea, of all the Sins of our Progenitors, since we were in their Loins, as well as in *Adam's* : So that yet this Scripture doth not prove what you bring it for ; it doth not prove that any deserves Hell and Damnation by Birth, nor can it favour or support that horrible Doctrine of God's positive and absolute Rejection of Men for *Adam's* Sin : but this Scripture is better understood of those that sin against the Law of Nature, which the God of Nature, according to his divine Will, hath placed in them, *Rom. 1. 26. Rom. 2. 14. 1 Cor. 11. 14.* which Light discovers Sin, reproveth, yea, judges and condemns for Sin : *If our Hearts condemn us, &c.* and tho the Light set up in them, the Law written in their Hearts, did flash Wrath in their Faces, their Consciences accusing them, *Rom. 2. 15.* yet they abused the Light, or Law of Nature, living

in Sin and Disobedience, and so were by Nature the Children of Wrath, &c. and so are all that come to act Sin; but no Persons by Birth are thus the Children of Wrath, nor none out of the Covenant of Grace made with *Adam*, till they come to abuse the Grace of the Covenant: For God hates none till they first hate him, leaves none till they first forsake him, makes none Partakers of Everlasting Burning, till they kindle his Wrath by their actual Sins; for he doth not so delight in the Blood of Souls, as by his pure and naked Will, to decree Man to Eternal Death, before they enjoy any Life, or commit the least Sin. Infants are accounted Innocent; and our Saviour tells us, 'tis not the Will of his Father that any of those little ones perish.

Philet. This is a strange assertion, to say, That all Infants come into World in a state of Innocency; and that if they die in Infancy, they die in a state of Innocency: Alas! there is a universal depravedness in the Soul of an Infant, which if it live to express it, will discover it self. A young Cub of a Fox or Wolf doth not presently discover its ravenous nature, but it is inherent in it, bred with it, and Men kill those young Cubs, though they never did any mischief, because it is their natures to be ravenous and mischievous: So an Infant hath the Seed of all Sin, a corrupt Nature, though it doth
not

not act as it doth when Age comes on ; and I say, God may for the guilt of *Adam's* sin, and because there is such Rebellion and Wickedness in Man's nature against him, glorifie his Justice upon them ; though they should die in their Infancy, they are far from dying in Innocency.

Philad. It seems by what you hold, because Man may slaughter Beasts of Prey without any cruelty or injustice, therefore God may as well, nay more, appoint as many of poor Infants to the Torments of Hell, if he pleaseth, and yet be just and good notwithstanding : May we not as well reason thus ? God without any injustice, appointed brute Creatures to be slain for Man's use, therefore he may ordain Men to be cast into Hell Torments for ever. Though God permit-
teth, nay appointeth Man to slaughter Beasts, that they might be Meat for his use, and so giveth him power to kill them ; yet it would be lock'd upon barbarous injustice and cruelty to prolong the Life of a Beast to vex and torture it, to shew what Power and Sovereignty he hath over it. So I do not doubt, but God may, when he pleases, take away the Life of an Infant, or Man ; yea, resolve them to nothing, without any cruelty or injustice : Yet he cannot without both these, decree to keep them alive in Hell, there to torment them without end, to shew his Sovereignty, without just cause in the Creature.

ture. Some poor Infants never so much as saw the Light of this World, or receiv'd the least Good, and yet must be punished with Devils to Eternity. O wretched Doctrine !

Philet. I do not think God would have destroy'd the Old World, and called them the World of ungodly, and destroy'd *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, and made them suffer the vengeance of eternal Fire, amongst whom, no doubt, were many Infants, if all Infants were innocent: I will not meddle to determine the eternal State of those that die in Infancy ; to be sure you go too far to assert what you do, you are not the Sovereign and Judge of all.

Philad. All Infants, through the Grace of God in our Lord Jesus Christ, are discharged from the condemning Power of Original sin ; and they having no actual sins, 'tis not the infirmity of their Nature shall damn any : neither can it, I hope, enter into the heart of a Christian, to believe that God should create any Infants on purpose to damn them ; and though it be true that Original sin is come upon Infants, and Death by sin, yet this is as true, that Original Sin was not committed against the Covenant of Grace ; and seeing that you cannot prove any Infant hath sinned against the Covenant of Grace, they cannot come into Condemnation of Hell Torments, for our Gracious God
will

will condemn none but those that first destroy themselves by sinful courses, though 'tis true they many times suffer the first Death for the sins of others, as those you mention.

Mar. All Infants are under a Sentence of eternal Damnation, only such Infants that are elected, and have the Principles of Grace infused in them, shall be sav'd.

Philad. What then is become of that Gracious Speech of the Almighty God, *Pf. 145. His tender mercy is over all his works?* sure damned Infants have no share in his Mercy; no, not so much as a Toad, by a thousand degrees. And thus by your Doctrine you not only most dreadfully preach Millions of poor harmless Souls to Hell, but also represent the Father of Mercy and God of Goodness, more like a Tyrant that destroys his Subjects for will and pleasure (though they never provok'd him by breaking the least Law in their own Persons) only to shew his Power over them: Would not such dealing be look'd upon (amongst Men) meer Cruelty, when acted by bare Prerogative and Power, not being attended with Equity, Justice and Mercy? Would this be Cruelty in Man, and shall we think, that the Infinite God, who is Goodness and Truth it self, will harbour it, or that he will proceed with Man according to his Absolute Power and Sovereignty, without being accompany'd with

with Justice and tender Mercy ? Or do we think the Lord will fall below man, and suffer himself to be out-done in Justice, Mercy, and Goodness, by any of his Creatures ? Surely, no : so though the Nature of man is too sadly depraved, by the sin of our first Parents ; yet it must needs be a contradiction to the Divine Goodness, Mercy, and Justice of God, to say that any suffer for their Fathers sins.

Mar. You talk of God's Justice, as if God could not punish one for the fault of another, and yet be Just ; you do not know what you talk of, I'll give you an instance to the contrary ; 'tis that of *Saul* utterly destroying of the *Amalekites*, 1 *Sam.* 15. 2, 3. he was to slay both man and woman, Infants and Sucklings ; and the reason was, because *Amalek* laid wait for *Israel* when he came up from *Egypt*, ver. 1. *Exod.* 17. 8. But now what had this People done, that was so many Generations remov'd from *Israel* coming out of *Egypt* ? Or what had the poor Infants and Sucklings done ? Or how can it stand with Justice, that the Fathers committed the fault, and the Children are punished for it ?

Philad. This was only to a Temporal Death ; I hope you will not say that it was the Decree of God, after *Saul* had destroy'd those Infants and Sucklings Bodies, that he would send their Souls to Hell for their Fathers faults ; sure it was not the sin of Infants

infants that caused the Lord to plead in such
 wrath with them, no more than the Cattle
 which was to be destroy'd as well as they ;
 Was God offended with the Beasts of the
 Field ? But come, I believe it was no unjust
 thing in God, to take away by Death those
 Infants and Sucklings, no more than to take
 away by Death many thousands which daily
 die through the World ; for Death reigns
 over all, and when Infants are taken away,
 either by a Natural Death, or in any cruel
 manner, 'tis for Sin, even that of *Adam's* ;
 yea, many times their own Parents Sin ha-
 stens the Death of the Child : and in Tem-
 porals, very often the Children suffer for
 the Father's fault ; not only in the good
 things of this Life, but also Death it self,
 as in the Old World, and in the overthrow
 of *Sodom* ; and are slain with the Sword as
 in this Case, and likewise in those common
 Calamities which have befallen Nations and
 Cities. But what, will any one dare to say
 that such Infants and Sucklings are damned ?
 Who can forbear trembling at such a dread-
 ful conceit ? And surely you that hold that
 Infants have sin enough from *Adam* to damn
 them to Hell, had need bring good Scripture-
 proof for such a dreadful Doctrine. But I
 need say no more to this, than to refer you
 to what Mr. *Grantham* hath writ upon this
 Subj. ct, in his Answer to Mr. *Petto*, and
 Mr. *Firmin*, in his *Presumption no Proof*, and
 his

his *Infants Advocate*, First and Second Parts ; where, if you be not wedded to your Opinion, or blinded with Prejudice, you will see that though all are guilty of *Adam's Sin*, *Rom. 5. 14.* yet Infants by the presentment of the Satisfaction of Christ, are, and shall be sav'd ; for the free Gift cometh upon all, *Rom 5. 18.*

Mar. Come, leave this, *Philetus*, you may easily perceive that *Philadelphus* owns that rotten and corrupt Opinion of universal Redemption, a grand piece of Popery.

Philet. Yea, I see he's an Arminian, and I doubt a Free-willer too, which is an old Pelagian Heresy, and hath been condemned for an Error long since, by the best and most knowing Christians.

Philad. This is but the Devil's subtilty and delusion to hood-wink Peoples Eyes, and to draw on a Vizard upon the lovely Face of true Religion, to make it extremely deformed, that so People may start at the naming of it.

Mad. Come pray let us have no Heats.

Philad. There shall be none for me ; yet methinks they deal in our Day and Time, by those that own the Truths of the Lord, much like the barbarous Pagans did by the Christians under the persecuting Emperors, who, that they might have some Pretence to put them to death, loaded them with odious Names and Imputations, as if all the Trou-
bles

bles that were in the World happened for their Sakes : As may be seen in *Tertullian's* Apology for the Christians. Or as they did when they put them to death in their publick Theater ; they put upon them the Skin of some Savage Beast, or put them into the shape of Monsters, such as the nature of Man has the most Antipathy against, that they might be the more excited to destroy them, and the more expos'd to the fury of the Dogs. Even so the noise of *Arminians*, *Pelagians*, *Poper*y, *Free-willers*, and I know not what, sounds so terrible to the Ears of some, that they neither will nor dare examine either the Writings or Opinions of those that differ from them, by the Word of God.

Mod. Neither will nor dare ! for what reason ?

Philad. Why, only their Teachers whom they admire have drawn them into a dislike of the Truth of God, by putting the Name of Ignominy and Reproach upon them : What tho the Papists hold universal Redemption, and are so unhappy to hold this part of Truth in unrighteousness ? Doth it therefore cease to be a Truth ? Or must I be ashamed or afraid to own it because held for a Truth by them ? May I not as well renounce the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, yea God and Christ too, lest I should be accounted a Papist ? The Devil held that Christ was the Holy One of God,
and

and may not I do so too ? It will not excuse any in the Rejection of any Truth, to say the Papists hold it. Tho it was told *Paul, Acts 28. 22.* That *this Sect was every-where spoken against* ; yet it did not turn him out of the way, or make him out of love with the Truths of God, neither ought it to do any ; and tho you may call this Truth, Popery, Arminianism, &c. yet was it owned for a Truth, before Popery or *James Arminius* was heard of, or had any being in the World, and is indeed the ground of all Saving-Truth, and Soul-establishing Comfort, since the Foundation of the World ; and the contrary to it will be found to appear rotten and un-found, having no firm footing in the Word of God, let it be varnish'd over with never such dresles of Words, or pretence of Zeal, thereby to make the Face of it shine in the Eyes of others. And I must tell you, I look upon it to be a piece of daring Pride in any that shall confidently attempt to set bounds and limits to God's infinite Wisdom and Goodness acted towards all Men, in the death of his Son.

Philet. Well, I am one of those that hold that God looking upon Man in the Fall, did set his Love upon some of the fallen Race, chusing some to eternal Life and Salvation, for which he gave his Son to die for them, and rejected others, and never afforded them an Object to believe in, nor power to believe, but hath left them to perish. *Philad.*

Philad. Pray prove what you affirm, if you can.

Philet. That God chuseth some to Life, and leaveth others in the Fall, of his meer Will and Pleasure ; I prove it by the Instance of *Jacob* and *Esau*, *Rom. 9. 13.* As it is written, *Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated.* And this was done before they were born : the one elected to eternal Life, and the other reprobated to eternal Death, and this at the meer Will and Pleasure of God.

Philad. I know it is concluded from this Text, that *Esau* in Person was damned ; but this is but Mens Rashness and Presumption ; there is not the least Syllable in all the word of God (that I know of) for Persons to ground such a Belief, or from whence to draw such a dreadful Conclusion, that *Esau* should be damned eternally. Love and Hatred in this Text may be with respect to Temporal Blessings ; and so *Esau* may be said to be hated, and *Jacob* loved, because to *Jacob* was given the fruitful Land of *Canaan*, and to *Esau* was given the barren Country of *Mount Seir* : Or Love and Hatred may be with respect to Christ, the promised Seed ; and so *Jacob* was separated or sanctified, to be the Fore-father of Christ according to the Flesh ; and *Esau*, with respect to that rejected, and so was but a common or profane Person. (Now this was one end of Circumcision, to distinguish the

the Family, of whom Christ should be born, and to keep that People, of whom the *Messiah* was to come, unmixed from the idolatrous Nations.) Now *Esau* very justly lost that Blessing for selling his Birth-Right at so base a Price; for *Esau* being the Elder of Right, the Blessing did belong to him; but he undervaluing of it, sold it to his Brother: So that now the Blessing, as well as the Birth-Right, was his Brothers; and so after *Isaac* had blessed *Jacob*, *Esau* could by no Means cause his Father to repent, or reverse his Blessing, tho he sought it carefully with Tears, *Heb. 12. 17.* but said, *Gen. 27. 33. I have blessed him, and he shall be blessed,* he could not recal it again. Yet this Rejection, as to his being the Person from whom the *Messiah* should come, or with respect to temporal Blessings, gives no one Ground to aver, that he was reprobated, in respect to the Salvation of his Soul: or these Words might be spoken, with regard to what they would do in time, God certainly knew what *Esau* would do in time, and might thereby shew what would in time be done unto him; or rather with respect to the Works of the Flesh and the Spirit: *Esau* being a Type of the one, and *Jacob* of the other; so the Works of the Spirit are pleasing to God, and always beloved of him: and so the Works of the Flesh are abominable to him; so that these two may be

be but two Types, as *Sarah* is said to be of the Gospel, and *Hagar* of the Law, and *Isaac* and *Ishmael* Types of the two Covenants, *Gal.* 4. 21, to 31. Besides, it is very plain, that it is not *Jacob* and *Esau* personally to be understood in this Text, but two distinct Nations, or People, which should proceed from them; as may be seen, if you read *Gen.* 25. 23. *Rebekah* being with Child, and finding a strange struggling in her Womb, went to inquire of the Lord, and received this Answer; *Two Nations are in thy Womb, and two manner of People shall be separated from thy Bowels, and the Elder shall serve the Younger, and the one People shall be stronger than the other People.* You see the Lord did not tell this good and godly Mother, that one of those she went with should be damned to all Eternity, but speaks of them as two Heads of two Nations; for we do not find these Words, *the Elder shall serve the Younger*, ever fulfilled in *Jacob* and *Esau* personally. Where do you find, that *Esau* was subservient to *Jacob*? but rather the contrary, *Jacob* calling *Esau* Lord; so that this Text speaks not of single Persons, but of Nations; and so the Love and Hatred there spoken of is National, as you may see by comparing this Verse with *Obadiab*, and *Psal.* 44. 4. where the Edomites are called *Esau*, and the Jews *Jacob*: and the cause why the Lord hated the Posterity of *Esau*, was for their Wickedness and

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Enmity

Enmity against the *Israelites* the Seed of *Jacob*, *Verse* 1, to 12. and so *Malachi* 1. 2, 3, 4. *I loved Jacob and hated Esau, and laid his Mountains waste*; but this could not be before *Esau* was born, or had any Mountains to lay waste; so that it cannot be here understood a personal Hatred: for 'tis plain, that what is here said is upon a national Account. Now for the better understanding this *Rom. 9.* we must take notice what was the main thing the Apostle was carrying on: Now, the main thing that he was upon, was not to maintain absolute and personal Election and Reprobation; this was not the way to convince the Jews of their Sin, in rejecting and crucifying the Lord of Life and Glory, and their slighting the Gospel; for this would have been the way to establish them in their Error, of being the only elect People in the World, because *Abraham's* Seed, to whom the Promise was at first made; and therefore their State safe enough, tho they did not believe in Christ. And saith Mr. *Loveday*, p. 224. "It is known for a
 " Truth, that there was no People under
 " Heaven more cordially principled in per-
 " sonal Election than they: they took all
 " but themselves to be reprobated, and for-
 " bad the Gospel to be preached to the Gen-
 " tiles, that they might be saved, 1 *Thess.*
 2. 16. The Jews, the Elder Brother, could not bear to see the kindness shewed by the
 Father

Father to the Prodigal, *Luke 15.* Nay, *Peter* himself greatly questioned his Lawfulness of going to preach to the Gentiles, till convinced of it by a Vision from Heaven, *Act. 10.* And when *Peter* came to *Jerusalem*, they contended with him about his going and conversing with the Gentiles, *Act. 11. 1, 2.* Yea, and for some time after the death of *Stephen*, many preached the Word of God to none but the Jews only. It appears, that notwithstanding Christ had given a Commission to preach the Gospel to the whole World ; yet they were ignorant of the calling of the Gentiles to partake of Mercy through Christ. Now if the Jews had understood, that personal Election and Reprobation had been the thing *Paul* was about to prove, they would never have quarrelled with him about it ; for they believed, that if any People in the World was beloved of God, it must needs be themselves ; for they above all other were chosen to be a peculiar People, and beloved for their Father's sake, and unto them pertained the Adoption and the Glory, and the Covenant, *Rom. 9. 12.* but this was not the Point, but the great Controversy between *Paul* and the Jewish Rabbies, was about the Terms of Justification, whether by the Law, or by Faith ; or upon what account a Sinner might be justified and saved ; and who was the Person to whom the Blessing belonged.

Now the Apostles Business is to assert and maintain Justification and Salvation to come in by Christ alone, without the Works of the Law ; and that there was an absolute Necessity of believing in Jesus Christ (where God hath afforded the Means) both by the Jews as well as Gentiles ; which will appear, if you look *Chap. 3. 4.* and *Chap. 10. 30.* and in *Gal. 2. 10.* he shews, that a Man is not justified by the Works of the Law, but by Faith. And this he proves from the Example of *Abraham*, who was not justified himself by Works, but by Faith ; and tho the Jews boasted much of their being *Abraham's* Seed, yet he tells them *Abraham's* Seed was many ; one by *Hagar*, another by *Sarah*. Now if the Promise was made to *Abraham's* natural Seed, then *Ishmael* as well as *Isaac*, and *Esan* as well as *Jacob* had inherited the Promise: but the Promise was not made to Seeds, as of many, but to a Seed ; which Seed was those that believe and walk in the steps of *Abraham*, *Rom. 4. 12.* These, whether Jews or Gentiles, were truly and only to be the reputed Children of *Abraham*, *Gal. 3. 7.* and *Heirs of the Promise*, *Verse 29.* so that it is neither Birth nor Works was perferred by God, nor any thing should be challenged by Birth or Works, but only through Faith in Christ ; and so the Elder serve the Younger, that is, the Jews the Elder, which seek Salvation by the

the Works of the Law, or according to the Flesh, shall not have it; but the Gentiles, the Younger, who seek Salvation by the free Grace of God, through Faith in Christ, shall have it, *Rom. 9. 33, &c.* So that this Text proves not what you bring it for; neither can you fairly understand it of such a Love or Hatred, as to prove either Persons or Parties are saved or damned; much less doth it prove, that God hates any personally, considered as they are Sinners in *Adam, &c.* Very well, saith *Dr. Homes, p. 8.* "God" cast off none, till they cast off him, *2 Chron. 36. 16. Prov. 29. 1.* And in the New Testament, only for the Sin of refusing Christ, all along is Damnation pronounced: — God doth not actually cast them off beyond all Remedy, till they actually cast off him, and so cast them off, not for original Sin, but actual Sins; and that not too for every actual Sin, but for those that cast off the Remedy, namely, the Word of Christ, and Christ the Word.

Philet. That God choseth some, and leaveth others in the Fall, I prove from the very Word, *Elect*, or *Election*; which is a separation, or singling out some (in a way of Mercy or Choice) from a Number; and whether these Scriptures do not prove this Election to be personal, without any respect unto Faith, *2 Tim. 2. 19. Phil. 4. 3. John 10. 3. Act. 19. 15. Rom. 11. 5, 7. Rev. 7. 4.*

Rom. 9. 11. *Mark* 13. 20. *Eph.* 1. 4. *1 Pet.* 1. 20. *Tit.* 2. 14, &c.

Philad. But you know that the Word Election doth not always suppose Rejection, but preferring one thing above another ; and it is frequent in Scripture to call both things and Persons of great Value, of special Worth and Excellency in their kind, Elect or Chosen, *1 Sam.* 26. 2. *Isa.* 22. 7. In this sense the *Messiah* was termed by the Jews, the *Elect or Chosen of God*, *Luke* 23. 35. and called a *Corner-Stone*, elect and precious, *1 Pet.* 2. 4. and *Paul* an *elect or chosen Vessel*. And *Dr. Hammond* tells us, " The Greek " Words used in *Rev.* 17. 14. viz. *Chosen* " and *Faithful*, are joined together, as words " of the same import.

Mod. I hope, *Philadelphus*, you will not dare to limit the Lord ; suppose God hath Elected some to Life and Salvation from Eternity, or from the Fall ; Is not God's Mercy his own ? May he not do with it as he pleaseth ? What if God will give to one that comes into the Vineyard at the eleventh hour, nay give to one *gratis*, for doing nothing, as much as he will to me for working according to my Covenant, what wrong doth he do to me ? Why should my Eye be evil because God is bountiful, or I repine that another obtains Mercy ?

Philad. I am none of those that pretend to keep the Keys of God's Secrets : I dare
not

not say God never did, nor ever will chuse any personally considered. But can it justly be concluded from God's predestinating, some, personally consider'd, to Eternal Life, that therefore all the rest were decreed absolutely to Condemnation, without any respect to their Disobedience; any more than when a King, without any Condition premised, pardons some that are guilty of the same Offence with others; that he thereby implies, that all the rest (to whom he offers Pardon upon such conditions as they were able to perform) should be Executed without Mercy? Neither do I see any grounds from these Scriptures, that we must needs understand Persons under a personal consideration, without respect to Faith in Christ, or any other Qualification, to be the object of Electing Love, and as such shall infallibly enjoy Eternal Salvation; I know no Scripture that saith so, nor can any Man be said to be chosen before the Foundation of the World, or from the Fall, any otherwise than in the Decree of God, which is brought forth in time, when they come actually to believe in Christ; for God calleth things that are not, as if they were, *Rom. 4. 7.* and it is a usual thing in Scripture to speak of things to be done in time, as if already done; as *Rom. 8. 30.* where the Apostle speaks as if they were already glorified, yet not actually glorified, nor any otherwise,

than in the Purpose or Decree of God : and so 2 *Tim.* 1. 19. *Tit.* 3. 5. they are said to be saved, who were not at that time actually saved ; so in *Ephes.* 1. 4. they are said to be chosen in him *before the Foundation of the World*, though not chosen till they came to believe in Christ ; for as Christ was called a *Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World*, *Rev.* 13. 8. though not slain till he took Flesh upon him, which was some thousands of Years after, even so Persons are said to be Elected from the Foundation of the World, though not chosen till they be in Christ ; and when Persons have once obtained a Being in Christ by Faith, they may truly be said to be Chosen, by virtue of that Decree of Election, which was in God before the Foundation of the World, whereby he decreed to chuse all those to Salvation who should repent of their Sins, believe in his Son, and be obedient to his Will ; and when they come into this State, God may be said to chuse them before the Foundation of the World, by virtue of the Decree that was in him. So that whatsoever Elective Love God hath, or might have for any of the degenerate Sons of *Adam*, more than for others : Yet this is a thing, that wholly lies hid in the secret Counsel of God, and wholly unknown to us ; but this the Scripture reveals for a truth, That *whomsoever God predestinates, them he calls, before they are ei-*

*ther justified or glorified, Rom. 8. 30. and so 2 Theff. 2. 13. through Sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the Truth, &c. Now if the Saints are chosen to Salvation through, &c. and were called to it by the Gospel, then they were not chosen actually before they had believed the Truth, or before they heard the Gospel. And to make this more plain, you know Paul was a chosen Vessel, or a most choice Instrument, a Vessel for the Lord's use, Acts 9. 15. yet he tells us, that he was before a Blasphemer, and a Persecutor, and Injurious, 1 Tim. 1. 13. and writing to his Son Titus, ch. 3. 3. speaking of himself, faith, *We our selves were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceiving, serving divers Lusts and Pleasures, living in Malice and Envy, hateful, and hating one another.* Now shall we say that Paul during his unbelief and impenitence was in a justified State, an adopted Child of God? Surely no.*

Philet. Well, how and when came Paul to be an adopted Child of God?

Phiad. How, why first God humbles him, brings him to the foot of Christ, calls him by his Grace, Gal. 1. 15. to which Call he was obedient, Acts 26. 19. and was regenerated and born again by the Washing of Regeneration, and Renewing of the Holy Ghost; by which he was led to believe and obey the Gospel, Acts 24. 14, 15, 16. and to live intirely to him that died for him,
and

and so he came to be sanctified, justified, and to obtain Mercy.

Philet. I believe that *Paul*, being an Elect Person, was as much in the love and favour of God, before he believed as after; yea, the Elect *Corinthians*, that were Fornicators, Idolaters, Thieves, Drunkards, &c. *1 Cor.* 6. 9, 10, 11. had as much right to Salvation before they believed as after.

Philad. I look upon this Speech of yours (that *Paul* and the *Corinthians* during their unbelieving State, were as much in the love and favour of God as after) to be very impious, and opens a gap for Men to run into all manner of Abomination; for if I once fancy my self to be one of the Darlings of Heaven, one of the Elected ones, and that I cannot possibly sin my self out of the love of God, and that I am no nearer Salvation after I believe, than I was before; Why may not I take liberty to commit any crime? For it seems Heaven may be found in the way to Hell, and in the Service of Sin and Satan; I may fulfil the Lusts of the Flesh, and of the Mind, and be fruitful in the works of Darkness, and God love me never the worse: no danger of forfeiting my Sonship, if this be true; all the Precepts of Vertue and Holiness, with all the gracious Promises of an Eternal Reward in Heaven, are all in vain; and all those powerful dissuasions from Sin, with those severe threatenings

nings of an Eternal Punishment as a Reward to the guilty, are all invalid, if the greatest sinner, the most prophane Liver, may arrive at Heaven as well as the most eminent Saint : Did ever such Doctrines proceed from the Lips of Truth, or are they to be found in the true Sayings of God ? No, no, but rather the contrary, *Eph. 5. 5. Rom. 2. 8, 9. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10, 11.* Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God ? &c. so that no Man that is an unregenerate sinner, is, or can be said actually to be Elected till Grace comes, and Faith comes and puts him into Christ, *Eph. 3. 17.* This is evident from the *Ephesians*; Paul calls them *Elect or Chosen before the Foundation of the World*; and yet however Elected, he tells them, that during the time they walked according to the Course of this World, &c. they were the Children of Wrath as well as others, and at that time *they were without Christ, and Strangers to the Covenant of Promise, having no hope, and without God in the World*, *Eph. 2. 12.* Surely it is impossible for any Person to be in Christ and out of him; dead and alive; old and new born at one and the same time; so that before Conversion we are not actually justified : This is so clear a thing, that the Assembly in their Confession *Chap. 11.* say, “ God did from all
“ Eternity decree to justify the Elect. Ne-
“ vertheless

“ vertheless they are not justified until the
 “ Holy Spirit doth in due time actually ap-
 “ ply Christ unto them. And so Dr. *Homes*,
 in his *Antidote against Antinomianism*, p. 56.
 “ If the Lord impute Christ to me a true
 “ Christian, my sins unto him, as 2 *Cor.* 5.
 “ *ult.* and so reputes me justified actually in
 “ him : He doth all this under the notion of
 “ Faith, *Rom.* 4. 3. If any say we are e-
 “ ternally justified in God’s Election or Pur-
 “ pose ; we reply, just so as we eternally
 “ believe in God’s Purpose, for he hath pur-
 “ posed eternally both equally : He that
 “ eternally purposed to justify, did eter-
 “ nally purpose to justify by Faith.

Mar. But doth not the Apostle say in
Rom. 4. 5. That God justifieth the ungodly ?

Philad. Yea, but we do not read of those
 that persevere in their ungodliness, that he
 will justify them ; for as God hath never
 promised, so he never purposed Salvation
 to an unregenerate heart, and a loose life.
 Persons may pleasingly dream themselves
 the Friends and adopted Children of God,
 tho’ they will know, to their own smart,
 that all that are under the Reign of sin, are
 yet under wrath: No Enemy to God and Ho-
 lineess is actually elected, nor hath receiv’d
 the Spirit of Adoption ; and if they have
 not receiv’d the Spirit, they are none of his.
 Now where the Spirit of God comes, it con-
 vinces

vinces of sin, *John* 16. 7, 8. and witnesseth with their Spirits that they are the Children of God, *Rom.* 8. 16. but do you think that the Holy Spirit will witness for us. or bring Joy and Comfort to us, if at the same time our Consciences testify to our Face, that our Deeds are Evil ; and that our walking is not such as to be deemed the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus to good Works, which God hath before ordained ? Doctor *Clifford* upon the *New Covenant*, p. 14. saith excellently ; “ Can you imagin
 “ that the Spirit seals to a Blank, and wit-
 “ nesseth to a Lye ? What ! teach People to
 “ cry *Abba*, Father, before they are born
 “ of God ? or persuade them they are
 “ justified when in a state of unbelief, and
 “ the Wrath of God abides upon them ; or
 “ assure them they are Heirs of the Pro-
 “ mise, when they are Strangers to the Co-
 “ venant ; or that their Estate is safe, when
 “ a Curse, and Death and Hell are denoun-
 “ ced against them ? Is this the Spirit’s wit-
 “ nessing, do you think ? or his way of
 “ sealing ? No, he first works Grace upon
 “ the heart, and then gives testimony
 “ to his own work ; he sanctifies first, and
 “ then seals to the day of Redemption, *Eph.*
 1. 13, 14. *Rom.* 8. 14. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, are the Sons of God ; and those that have not Christ’s Spirit, Christ’s Image, cannot have any true Fellow-
 ship

ship with him : *Can two walk together except they be agreed ? Amos 3. 3.* Doth Reconciliation with God stand with agreement with Satan ? Can a League with Heaven and Hell stand together ? Do you think that the Judge of all the Earth will say, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom,* to his Enemies ? But *Philetus*, what makes you think that *Paul* and the *Corinthians* were as much in the Love and Favour of God, before they believed as after ?

Philet. Why, because their believing and obeying the Gospel, was an Effect of their Election : Our Persons must first please God before our Actions can please him ; and when once God loves a Person, he never ceaseth to love him, *for the Gift and Calling of God are without Repentance, Rom. 11. 29.* and so *Malachi 4. 6. I am the Lord, I change not :* Now if *Paul* and the *Corinthians* were elected before they were born, and that then God set his Love upon them, and after during their Unbelief and Sin, should be supposed not to love them ; it would argue a strange Inconstancy and Mutability in God ; and so according to this Notion of Election, God must be supposed one while to hate a Person when wicked, and another while to love him when regenerate.

Philad. Indeed, if we must needs understand, that God had elected *Paul* and the *Corinthians*, as *Paul*, or as Men simply so considered,

sidered, and not as Believers, or as their being in Christ by Faith; then for God to love a Person to Day, and hate him to Morrow, would evidently shew a change in his Affection, according to the change made in the Creature. And I must needs tell you I like this plain dealing the best; you are herein truer to your Principles, than many of your Brethren that hold this Point of personal Election. But for my part, I believe that God loveth and accepts more of Actions that are good, than of mere Persons; and contrary to what you say, that such and such Actions do therefore please him, because the Person pleaseth him; but rather because their Actions please him, therefore their Persons please him: tho *God hates all the Workers of Iniquity*, Psal. 5.5. yet said he to *Cain*, Gen. 4. 7. *If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?* and Heb. 11.5,6. *Before his Transgression he had this Testimony, that he pleased God, but without Faith he could not:* Read John 14. 23. and 15. 14. and 16. 27. These are those that he will love; yet may those that were once beloved of God by reason of Sin, come to be the object of his hatred, *Isa. 63. 9, 10. But they rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit; therefore he was turned to be their Enemy, and fought against them;* Now you that say, that where once God loves, he must never cease to love; Pray you, what think you of the Angels that fell? Do you think
 God

God did not love them while they stood in that pure and holy State, in which they were created? and if he did, do you think that he loves them now in their Apostacy? So God is said to love *Jacob* and *Israel*, yet at another time he is said to hate *Israel*, *Jer.* 12. 7, 8. *Amos* 6. 8. yet is this taken off again, *Isa.* 60. 15. whereas they were hated, God loved them again. So that God may love at one time, and hate at another, without the least change in him, in respect of Love or Hatred, because no Person of Man is supposed to be the Object of elective Love, but only as Righteous, nor any Person the Object of Reprobation, but only as Wicked; so that the Love of God being set upon such kind of Persons as are true Believers, those who have Christ formed in them, whose Souls are regenerated and formed into the Image of Jesus, and Partakers of the heavenly and divine Nature, having received that heavenly and divine Anointing, by virtue of which they become Christians, *1 Cor.* 6. 17. *John* 15. being wrought into a Conformity to Jesus; this is that State, in which the true Election stands; Christ being the elected Root, and Believers the elected Branches. These are those whom God doth justify, and will glorify; these are those whom the Lord hath set apart for himself, *Psal.* 4. 3. These are those whom the Lord hath chosen from the rest of the

the

the World to be his own peculiar Favourites, upon whom he intends to bestow an heavenly Inheritance; and as Persons decline from Christ, living in a State of Unbelief and Impenitency, being Strangers to the Life of God, disobedient, and to every good Work reprobate, they remaining such, are in that state in which Reprobation stands, not being brought over to Christ, *in whom the Father is well pleased.* So that I conceive that Unchangeableness which the Scripture asserts of God, is to be considered with respect to his Essence, Attributes and Decrees, and not in his constant loving the same Persons, how wicked soever they prove. For, suppose God should dearly love a Person while he is faithful to him; and in case this Person should apostatize, and die in a state of Impenitency, and he should destroy him with eternal Death, this doth not shew the least Alteration in any of the Lord's Attributes, either of Love, Goodness, Mercy, Justice, &c. And suppose a Man passeth from a State of Sin, wherein he lived to the Displeasure of the Lord, to a State of Faith and Holiness, and in this Condition comes to enjoy the Love and Favour of God; yet his Love and Hatred cannot be said to be changed, tho the Persons of Men change never so often from Good to Evil, or from Evil to Good: This shews indeed a change in Man, but no change at all in the Lord;

he still loves and hates, but what he loved and hated before. Pray consider, *Ezek. 18. at what Instant I spake, &c. if it doth Evil, I will repent* : Here you see God is said to repent, so he is said to repent that he made Man upon the Earth, *Gen. 6. 6.* he is said to repent that he made *Saul King, 1 Sam. 15. 11.* And yet the Scriptures cannot be broken, which testify *that with God is no Repentance, or shadow of change, 1 Sam. 15. 29. Num. 23. 19. James 1. 17. Mal. 3. 6. Psal. 102. 25.* yet here is no real Contradiction : And as I said before, in respect of his Essence, Attributes and Decrees, God cannot repent ; yet after the manner of Men he is said to repent, in respect of his Works ; for as Men, when they repent, alter their Works, so, when God alters his Work, he is said to repent, as in *Gen. 6. 6. I will (saith God) destroy Man from the Earth, for it repents me, &c.* God made Man to dwell upon the Face of the Earth, but now coming to destroy Man from off the Earth, seems to repent ; and so concerning *Saul, I repent that I have made Saul King*, that is, I have determined to depose him, and to prefer another. And so concerning *Ely, &c. Delawn Sacr. p. 50.* So that no such Conclusion can reasonably be drawn from God's once loving, he must for ever love (how wicked soever the Person proves afterwards) or else be mutable ; for I do not find in Scripture, that

that God hateth any of the Works of his Hands, as they are his Creatures, nor any thing but Sin and Sinners for the cause of Sin : and there is the same Consideration, or the like Reason of his Election being placed upon Faith and obedient Persons, or Persons really brought over to Christ.

Philet. The Elect are justified in the Eternal purpose of God ; and tho the Elect do sin, yet the Lord sees it not so, as to condemn them for it, neither can it do them any hurt, or make them less lovely in the sight of God.

Philad. Hold, one word before you go any farther ; you seem to say God was never an Enemy to the Elect : Do you not by this make the Fall of *Adam* (in whom the Elect were included) a mere Fiction, and the whole Story of the Gospel concerning Christ's Suffering a Fable, and the Passion of Christ, if you grant he suffered for the Elect, a mere Vanity, more than needs, to die to reconcile and bring those into Friendship with God, which were never out of his Love, nor with whom he was never offended ?

Philet. I say, all the Sins (of the Elect, both past, present, and to come) are taken away by Christ, *Rom. 8. 33. Who shall lay any thing to the Charge of God's Elect, &c.* and so *Rom. 4. 23. Isa. 35. 8. The Lord hath laid upon him the Iniquity of us all; and 1 Pet. 2. 24. himself bore our Sins on his Body, &c.*

and what I said, I will say, that tho the Elect may sin as well as others, yet their God in Christ will never un-son them, nor yet touching their Justification and eternal Salvation, will he love them ever a whit the less; yea, tho they commit never so many, and great Sins: For this is a certain Truth, that as no Good in them, or done by them, did move him to elect and justify them, and to give them eternal Life; so, no Evil in them, or done by them, can move him to take that away, when once given.

Philad. This is like that which is in the Mouth of some, *Be in Christ, and sin if thou canst*; what pity is it that Men pretending to Wisdom and Sobriety, and Professors of Godliness, should fall into such Raptures as are next to Madness? What a bundle of Errors are here wrapt up together, and that under Scripture-guize; but surely you do not read the Scripture in that Spirit in which it was wrote, or else you might see, notwithstanding the Apostle's triumphing, that till Persons repent of their Sins and turn to God, they stand charged with many things, as I have told you from *Eph. 2.* and from *Paul*, who was before his Conversion, a Persecutor, a Blasphemer, and confess'd himself the chief of Sinners; yea, before the Apostle comes to this Triumphing, he was long exercised with Frights, Terrors within, and Frightnings without, and tells the

the *Corinthians*, 1 *Cor.* 2. 3. that his Preaching among them was in great fear and trembling; so that we must Fight before we Triumph, and Mourn before the Lord Comfort us. And how clearly doth 1 *Pet.* 2. 24. shew that the proper intention of Redemption is Domination, eternal Redemption is an eternal Obligation to Service. Ye are bought with a price, ye are not your own; your Bodies and Spirits are the Lord's, 1 *Cor.* 6. 19, 20. *Rom.* 14. 9. You may see that one end of Christ's being a Redeemer, was that he might be a Sovereign Lord over his Purchase; yea, this is one great end of the Lord's entering into Covenant with his People, promising to do great things for them, *Ezek.* 11. 19, 20. I say, the end of all is, that they might serve him: *Hockins* on *God's Decree*, p. 93. " Can we entertain so igno-
 " ble a belief, that the eternal Son of God
 " should suffer for any less end than to ad-
 " vance our Human Nature to the greatest
 " height of Piety and Purity of Life; and
 " to raise our Souls to the most refined and
 " sublimate goodness? What, did Christ
 take our Nature upon him, and become Sure-
 ty for us, and pay such an infinite price for
 us, that we might spend more freely and
 daringly on the Stock of our Surety's Satis-
 faction? Ah! Who can withhold their
 Eyes from Tears, to think that any should
 make use of Mercy to damn them? For ma-
 ny had not been guilty of so many Sins, nor

persisted in them without Repentance, had it not been for their false hope in Christ, not considering Christ came to redeem from all Iniquity, as well as from all Wrath.

Philet. But Christ dying for the Elect, hath thereby fulfilled all Righteousness, satisfied Divine Justice, and purchased Heaven for them.

Philad. And what then ?

Philet. Why, then there's no doubt, but they shall be saved ; for in the very moment of Election they were pardoned of all Sins past, present, and to come.

Philad. What, as if now nothing could endanger their Souls, they have enough for Heaven : Pray what should hinder them from bidding all Sin welcom ? Why may they not kill, whore, &c. and commit all Abomination ; and if impleaded for it, bring in this as an Evidence, that they were in the very moment of Election pardoned of all Sins past, present, and to come ; they have a Gracious God that will forgive them, and a Surety who hath paid for all ?

Philet. I perceive what you are driving at : You hold that Faith and Obedience in us to be the cause of God's Electing or Chusing us to Life and Salvation : Doth not the Scripture prove that Election is not according to foreseen Faith, not because Men do or will believe, but because they should believe, *Rom. 9. 11. 1 Pet. 1. 2, 3, 4. 2 Tim.*

1. 9. *Tit.* 1. 1. Now if Faith and Obedience be the cause of God's loving us, then here is Merit ; this eclipses the Glory of God's free Love, and renders Salvation of Debt, and not of Grace.

Mar. This is down-right Popery ; nay, I affirm, that Faith and Repentance are no more a means to go to Heaven by, than prophane Cursing and Swearing.

Philad. That Faith in Christ, and Obedience to the Lord, is a cause without which God chuseth none to Life and Salvation, is a Truth, unless you can prove that God hath designed his Son to die, to save such as will neither repent of their Sins, believe, nor obey him, but live and die in open Rebellion against God, and do despight to the Spirit of Grace, and trample under foot the Blood of the Son of God, &c. but that it is the cause for which God chuseth any, I disown as well as you : For the Love of God the Father to the Sons of Men, as they were Sinners, and Enemies to him, was the essential cause of our Salvation, *John* 3. 16. *Rom.* 5. 6, 8, 10. 1 *Pet.* 3. 18. and Jesus Christ the meritorious and procuring cause of Man's Salvation ; and should we admit of any thing else but Christ to be the matter of our Justification, or the meritorious Cause of Eternal Life, this would be injurious to the Perfection of Christ's Righteousness, and overthrow the freeness of Divine Grace and

Love. But you and all Men ought rightly to divide and distinguish between the Cause and Condition of our Salvation, that Christ may be owned as the Cause and Author of it, and Faith and Obedience as the way and means to attain to it: for as God Almighty hath prepared a Heaven for Men, so he hath appointed the way and means to fit and prepare them for it; as Christ is the Way, so if I should say that Faith and Obedience is a way to come to enjoy it, I might say it was advancing Nature above Grace, or setting up our own Righteousness in the room of Christ's Righteousness, and so robbing him of his Honour, or asserting Merits; surely Eternal Happiness hereafter hath some dependance upon Holiness here.

Mod. I like this well, and do believe that God that hath appointed the end, hath also appointed the means, as in the Case of *Paul*, *Acts* 27. 22. though God had promised to save *Paul* and all that were in the Ship, yet they were to use the means, otherwise they could not be safe. I would have none think, that God will do all our Works for us, while we sit still and do nothing: For as God must blow upon the Spark of Grace by his Spirit, so we should be storing up Holy Endeavours; God will not bring his People to Heaven sleeping, but praying in the use of Means and Holy Ordinances, yet may Means and Duties be greatly abused if we be not careful.

Philad.

Philad. Yea, they are abused when we do not look through them all to Jesus, or when we make them as Mediators, set them in the room of Christ; or when Christ is not eyed, sought to, admired and trusted in: Alas! What can poor Sinners do without a Jesus? There is no Salvation in any other; the highest measure of Believing, Doing, or Suffering, cannot turn away God's Wrath for the least Sin: All our Prayers, Tears, Alms, Duties, do not pacifie God; no, we must with Holy *Paul* count all as nothing to win Christ; so that had not Christ perfectly fulfilled the Law, and have been made a Curse for us, *Gal.* 3. 13. the exactest Christian could have no grounded hopes of Heaven, there is no escaping the Curse but by Christ; so that all that do, or have escap'd the Curse, have cause to say, that not their own Graces, nor their own Works, but Christ hath delivered them from Wrath to come. 'Tis Christ's precious undertaking that gives us a right to Heaven; but yet our walking in the Holy Commands of God, fits us for it, *For without holiness none shall see the Lord,* *Heb.* 12. 14. *Rev.* 21. 27.

Philet. If Christ be our Righteousness and Sanctification, as *1 Cor.* 1. what need we have any Righteousness of our own? Nay, there is no Qualification or Condition (in the *New Covenant*) required on our part. 'Tis all free; 'twas free Love in God to send his

his Son to die for his People ; and free Love in Christ to lay down his Life for the Elect : neither is it the Elect, but Christ that stands engaged to God by the *New Covenant* ; free Grace wholly excludes Self, or any thing we can do, as a Cause procuring, or as a Condition qualifying us for the receiving of it. Here's a comfortable difference between the *New Covenant* and the *Old* ; the *Old* was such, that in case Man did fail to perform his Condition, the *Covenant* was broke, and God was free from giving Life ; but in the *New Covenant* Man is tied to no Condition that he must perform, which if he doth not, it will make the *Covenant* void to him ; and those that teach otherwise, detract and lessen the free Grace of God, and attribute something to the Creature.

Philad. Tho' the Love, Grace and Mercy of God in our Redemption be wholly free ; no one sought out to him for a Saviour, but he alone was moved by his own Love to a poor lost Creature, and first sought after him, when he was fallen ; God was not bound to bring forth a Saviour for any, he was not laid under any necessity to cast an Eye of Pity upon Man ; it was an Act of free Grace to save Sinners by the Obedience and Suffering of Jesus : Yet is nothing to be accounted free Grace, without the Lord, for the sake of Christ, pardon the Sins of the most Impure and Impenitent, and bring them to Heaven

Heaven whether they will or no? Was not God at liberty to pardon Sinners in what way, and upon what terms he pleased; such as he in his Wisdom, should judg most meet, and most consistent with his Justice, Mercy, Truth and Holiness? God hath no where promised to save Men by Jesus Christ, that I know of, but by Repentance, Faith and Obedience, as the means, as you may see, *John* 3. 16, 36. *Mark* 16. 16. *Luke* 13. 3. 5. *Mat.* 4. 17. *Acts* 3. 19. *Rev.* 22. 14. *Rom.* 2. 7, 8, 9, 10. and in *Heb.* 5. 9. Christ is there said to be *the Author of Eternal Salvation*; To whom? To those that continue in their Rebellion and Impenitency? No, but to such as obey him; 'tis true, Christ came into the World, that the Sentence of Eternal Death might not be executed upon us, yet 'tis ungrateful wickedness, and no better than to tread under foot the infinite price of Forgiveness, to think; because his Blood hath purchased a Pardon, therefore we are freed from our Duty to him. And whereas you say that in the *New Covenant* Man is tied to no Condition that he must perform, &c. and that not Man but Christ stands engaged to God, &c. methinks 'tis a very fine way to acquit your self of all Sins, and consequently of all punishment for Sin; but if Christ stands engaged to repent, believe, and obey the Gospel, how comes it to pass that Persons are exhorted to them, and charged

charged with Sin upon the omission of them ? Surely then all the Sins of the Elect (for they sin as well as others) must be charged upon Christ ; and he stands guilty of all the breaches of the *New Covenant* : how an you endure to speak this without abhorrence ? But is there no Condition, no Qualification required on our parts, in order to come to partake of the Great and Gracious Promises ? Then what's the meaning of all these Scriptures, *John* 15. 10. *Prov.* 4. 5. *Rom.* 8. 13. *Mic.* 7. 21. *Prov.* 28. 13. *Rom.* 2. 8, 9. and what are all those Blessed and most Gracious Promises in *Mat.* 5 ? Do they not include Conditions, something to be done on our parts, if we would find acceptance with the Lord ? Pray read *Luke* 13. 3. *John* 6. 53. *Mat.* 18. 3. *John* 3. 5. *Mat.* 5. 20. *John* 15. 20. Nay, view those many Expressions which you find in the Word of God in the Commands, Exhortations, Instructions, Threatnings, and Promises ; and then see whether we come to enjoy the great Blessings of the Gospel without conditions.

Mar. Doth not the Scripture say, *Isa.* 64. 6. *That all our Righteousnesses are as filthy Rags, yea, as a menstruous Cloth ?*

Philad. I am satisfied that this Scripture is greatly abused for want of a right understanding, and rightly distinguishing between that Righteousness which doth justify us at the Bar of God's Justice, and that

that Righteousness which is God's Requirement, and so the Creatures Duty ; now taken in one Sense, they are no better than filthy Rags, and in the other they are : now if we expect to merit Heaven, and obtain Eternal Salvation for well doing, this is to overthrow the blessed undertaking of Jesus Christ, and lessen the free Grace of God , as if Persons could go to Heaven without being beholden to Jesus. And here it is that they are no better in the sight of God, having no worth or value, but are rejected of the Lord as filthy Rags : but now as they are the Holy Commands and Appointments of the Lord, and the Creature's Duty ; who dare say that they are in the sight of God, as filthy Rags, or as stinking Carrion ? What, hath God required his Creatures to perform such and such Duties, and hath promised his Spirit to assist them in the performance of their Duties ; and when the Creatures have done the best they can, nay when they have the assistance of the Spirit ; What, all no better than Abomination ? Ah ! what pity is it that Men, to hold up a fond Opinion, should have such unworthy thoughts of God ; What said *David Ps. 141. 2. Let my Prayers be set forth before thee as Incense, and the lifting up of my hand as the evening Sacrifice ;* and said the Angel to *Cornelius, Acts 10. 4. Thy Prayers and thy Alms-deeds are come up for a memorial before God ;* they were acceptable
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in the sight of God, and the Lord was well pleased with them, as *Heb. 13. 16. but to do good and to communicate, forget not ; for with such Sacrifices God is well pleased :* and so *Phil. 4. 18. An odour of sweet smell, a Sacrifice acceptable and well pleasing to God :* Read *Prov. 12. 22. Psal. 147. 11. Act. 10. 35. Mal. 3. 4.* In all which you may see, That as they are commanded of the Lord, and the Creatures Duty, they are acceptable to him.

Mar. If of Works, then not of Grace ; there's no Reward belongs to any good Works, Heaven and Eternal Salvation is the free Gift of God : And I must tell you, that all such as you are stand condemned, and accursed by the Apostle *Paul*, that set up the Golden Calf of your own Sanctification.

Philad. What, is it not possible for free Gift and Reward to stand together, nor for Gospel-Dutys, and a heavenly Reward to be linked and joyned together ; or is it a Dishonour to God, to say he rewards his own Grace ? What, are you such a Stranger to the Scripture, that you have not read of Recompence or Reward, which God will bestow upon those that are faithful, not for the desert of the Work or Worker, but for the Faithfulness of the Promiser, which God, who cannot lie, hath promised ? Pray read *Prov. 19. 17. Blessed is he that hath Mercy upon the Poor, the Lord will recompence that*
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which he hath given him. And faith our Saviour, *a Cup of cold Water shall not lose its Reward*, Matt. 10. 24. Mat. 20. 34. Rev. 22. 12. Psal. 19. But it seems you would put it out of all doubt, that you pretend to depend upon your own Righteousness; and that the Almighty, by his Bounty and Grace, having elected you, he cannot expect any Duty from you. You must (as *Cliford*, in the *New Covenant*, p. 197. faith) "Have a cheap Religion, Faith without Works, Pardon without trouble of Repentance, and Heaven without Holiness, and free Grace to save you without Obedience, or you are undone to Eternity. Indeed, if any shall believe that their own Obedience to any Precept of the Lord, justly merits Heaven, then they might dance about their Duties, as the Israelites about their Golden Calf; but I hold no such thing, but do believe that we are far from meriting any thing at the Hand of God; for he that merits must do these three things.

1st. He must do the Work of himself, without the Help and Assistance of another; for if he doth it by the Help and Assistance of another, the other merits both the Praise and Reward. Now, where is the Man that can come forth, and say, that what good he doth, he doth it without the assisting Grace of God; and if he cannot say so, then the Thanks and Praise is due to God alone.

2dly.

2dly. He must do it of mere good Will; and not of Duty; that which is of Duty cannot merit, because a Man is bound to do it; so that if Men could love the Lord with all their Hearts, Strength and Soul, and their Neighbours as themselves (which is a thing no Man can do) yet is it far from meriting, because it is but their Duty, and but a reasonable Service, that they should honour the Lord with that which they receive from him, as holy *David* said, *1 Chron.* 29. 11, 12. and so on: the more we do, the more we stand indebted to Divine Grace, for enabling us to do it; what have any, that have not received it first from God? *1 Cor.* 4. 7. *2 Cor.* 3. 5. *Eph.* 2. 8.

3dly. The Work done to merit, must be proportionable to the Reward, or there can be no Merit; but alas! what's the best of Performance, which is performed by infirm Man? can it have that Worth and Dignity in them, as to oblige the Lord to give unto them eternal Life, by way of Retribution? If God should reward us according to our Works, miserable would be our Case; so that unless it can be proved, that our present Work is comparable to the Glory which is to be revealed, there can be no Merit, 'tis a free Gift, 'tis Bounty: for suppose I should set any Man to work, to mow in my Field; and for that Labour give him a Shilling, or Fourteen, or Sixteen Pence;

Pence ; here's only Equity and Justice. the Man's Labour really deserved it ; but if for this one days faithful Labour, according to his Strength, I shou'd give him a Thousand Pounds, this is Bounty : so that no finite Creature or Worker can merit an infinite Reward ; or a finite Act cannot merit of an Infinite God an Infinite Reward.

Philet. Therefore, you that preach and press to Duty, are but legal Preachers, and such as would lead Men to Popery, and into a dead Faith ; for it much derogates from the free Grace of God, and lessens the sufficiency of Christ's Merits, and at best makes but moral Christians.

Philad. Is there any such thing as Holiness and Duty to be observed ? if there be, may they not be preached, and urged ? or how can any of you that own the Scriptures scorn or disallow it, seeing it calls the Saints not only to the Study and Practice of Holiness, but also to grow and increase in it, 1 *Theff.* 4. 16. 1 *Pet.* 1. 15. 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. 1 *Cor.* 15. 58. Tho we cannot merit Heaven, yet 'tis our Obedience, both in Heart and Life, makes us capable of injoying Heaven, through the Redemption of our Saviour : we must be Workers or Labourers, not Loyterers. St. *Paul* exhorts the Christians of his time to be working out their Salvation with
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fear and trembling : It seems the Christians are to do something towards their own Salvation, *Phil.* 4. 17. In *2 Cor.* 9. 6. *Paul* speaking of Charity, shews it to be a means (not a merit) to conduce to a plentiful increase: and *2 Pet.* 1. 11. tells us, that Grace exercised, is a means to farther our Salvation. But it seems we must not acknowledg God a Rewarder of his own Grace, or any good Duty which he enables his People to perform, but straight we preach Popery : how then can any desire to be good, or do good ?

Philet. For all the pressing us to Duty, yet we do not build the Hopes of our Salvation upon so sandy a Foundation as our own Righteousness; our hopes are in the Lord, we put our trust in Christ, and hope to be saved by his precious Undertakings.

Philad. I never did, nor I hope never shall desire you to lay the stress of your Salvation upon your well doing, for that would be to build upon the Sands indeed, a very infirm Foundation : Seeing that without shedding of Blood, there is no Remission of Sin, and consequently no Heaven. Yet, give me leave to tell you, that to expect Salvation through Christ, without Righteousness of Heart and Life, is a most infirm Foundation to build our hopes of Heaven upon; and indeed 'tis nothing but downright

right Presumption, and at the best but the hope of the Hypocrite which will perish, *Job* 8. 13, 14. *Deut.* 29. 19. If you think to find Heaven, because Christ died for your Sins, and you not bound to the actual Performance of those Duties God hath enjoined you to perform; I cannot see but you must shew us another Gospel, yea, and blot out all the Ten Commandments: But I tell you, Christ himself will not save such; 'tis contrary to the Attributes of his Justice, for *he will render to every one as their Works shall be*, *Rom.* 8. 13. *1 Cor.* 6. 9. Let but any of you shew me a Word from God or Christ, that he will save Persons in the profane Contempt of his Service, and I will open my Mouth no more against it.

Philet. Did not I tell you, he would lead us back again to the Law, which is wholly abolished by Christ? we are not now under the Law, but under Grace.

Mar. The Law is a cursed Creature.

Philad. A Creature! what do you mean by that? Where doth the Scripture call the Law a Creature? I doubt your design is to invalidate the Law of God, which is a divine Direction for all Men, in all holy, just and spiritual Duties.

Mar. I could show you it under the hands of fifty Divines, that the Law is a Creature;

besides the many Arguments I could give to prove it a Truth, if you please to hear them.

Philad. If you can prove it from the Scripture, I'll hear you, but I see you do not that; and as for those Divines you speak of, tho they may be Men of Piety and Learning, yet we ought to follow no Man, but as he follows Christ, nor take notice of the Quality of Persons, and what they believe, but the Solidity of their Proof, and how they agree with the Standard of God's Word: for want of this, Persons are ready to suck in corrupt Notions, without any serious Examination, merely because others said it, for whose Piety and Learning they have a great and venerable Esteem; and indeed, when Mens Persons are admired presently, their Notions, tho never so unsound, are received as the Oracles of God: which thing has been of fatal Consequence in all Ages, and has given footing to most, or all the pestilent Doctrines and Errorst hat have incumbred the Church of God. Pray ask those Divines you spake of, whether they will stand to this, That the Law, as it is the Mind and Will of God, is a Creature; whether there is any thing in God perishable or changeable. As Learned as they hold these three things as a Truth.

1st. That God wills nothing in time.

2dly. That God cannot but have that Will which he hath.

3dly. That God cannot have any Will which for the present he hath not. Now as the Law contains the Mind and Will of God, it is as ancient as himself; yea, there is in it a supernatural, divine, and unperishing Virtue, resembling God himself, which shall as easily be destroyed as his Law, and was, and is, and shall remain a word of Eternal Verity, Equity and Purity, planted in the Heart of Man, and is an immutable and eternal Rule of Duty; and the breach of it calls for an eternal Punishment upon all Contemners and Abusers of it (notwithstanding their boast of Gospel Grace) if not repented of.

Philet. I tell you the Law is wholly abolished by Christ; we are not now under the Law but under Grace.

Philad. 'Tis true; Believers are not now under the Law, namely in-respect of Justification by it, or of personal and perfect Obedience to it, which Christ in our stead hath performed, *Gal. 4. 4.* nor under the Curse of the Law, that is, the damning Power of it; they are now under Grace, that is, the Dispensation of Gods Grace, the Gospel: yet we are not to think that Be-

lievers are so freed from the Curse of the Law, as to be freed from exercising the Duty and Precepts of Righteousness and Holiness : Nay, tell me you that say the Law is wholly abolished, what there is in all the Ten Commandments that is not a Christian Duty? If the Law be wholly abolished, what should hinder Persons from worshipping false Gods, breaking the Sabbath, Swearing, Killing, Whoring, Stealing, doing any thing at all? no Sin if there be no Law : for *where there is no Law, there is no Transgression.*

Philet. The Apostle tells us, *That Christ is the end of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believes,* Rom. 10. 4.

Philad. But what end? the fulfilling end, but not the destroying end of the Law : tho' 'tis true, with respect to the Ceremonial part of the Law, which was only a shadow of good things to come, *Heb.* 10. 12. and center'd in Christ; and end in him, he being the true Spiritual Substance, unto whom that part of the Law was directed, it may be said that Christ was not only the fulfilling end, but the abolishing end of the Law. He is also the end of the Moral Law; First, because he fully and perfectly obeyed the Law, and so the Law in him obtained its end, which it had not done amongst all the Sons of Men,

2dly,

2dly, He was the end of the Law, on whom all the Maledictions of the Law had full accomplishment.

3dly, He was the end of the Law, in whom all the Blessings and Promises of the Law obtain their end, for they are all in Christ Jesus. *Yea and Amen, 2 Cor. 1. 20.*

4thly, He's the end of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believes, because God doth impute unto Believers that Righteousness which the Law requires : Thus Christ is the end of the Law. Yet 'tis folly to believe that Christ is so the end of the Law, that we are now wholly exempted from our Obedience to those Precepts which the Law requires ; or that Gospel Grace, which hath appeared to all Men. *Tit. 2. 11, 12.* should absolve the Creature from that Love and Obedience which is due to his Creator. Disobedience cannot be the spot of God's Children : 'Tis true, the Jews thought that they must needs reject the Law, if they admitted the Doctrine of *Paul* concerning Justification by Faith ; whereas the Apostle proves that his Doctrine was so far from prejudicing the Law, that it indeed established it, *Rom. 3. 31. Chap. 4.* So that neither Christ put an end to the Moral Law, *Mat. 5. 17.* nor his Apostles : therefore the Law is not abolished.

Philet. The Apostle saith that the Elect that believe are dead to the Law ; the Law can no more command a Man, than a dead Husband can command his Wife.

Philad. 'Tis true, Believers are dead to the Law with respect to the Curse and Rigor of it ; but yet this Death to the Law brings Believers to a New Subjection : you are dead to the Law, that you might be married to another, that you should bring forth Fruit to God : so that you may see the blessing of the Marriage-Union between Christ and faithful Souls, is fruitful before God, in living in Subjection to his blessed Maker and Redeemer.

Mar. But doth not the Apostle bid Believers stand fast in the Liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free, and be not intangled in the Yoke of Bondage, which is the Law ?

Philad. This word Liberty, not rightly understood, may be a Snare to destroy precious Souls ; we are bid to stand fast in the Liberty in which Christ hath made us free, but not in the Liberty in which Satan, the Lust of Men, the Spirit of Error, Carnal Interest, &c. make us free. Christian Liberty is a freedom from Sin, not in Sin ; *Rom. 6. 18.* it is a free serving of God, to do his Will, not the will of the Flesh ; we are called to
Liberty,

Liberty, but we are not to use it as occasion of the Flesh, *Gal. 5. 13.* Gospel Grace brings glorious freedom, 'tis true, from the Curse of the Law, the guilt of Sin, and wrath of God, and from the burden of legal Ceremonies, Sacrifices, Circumcision, with other heavy Yoaks ; yet is this Liberty to be confined to Scripture Rules. Believers freedom should be like the Heavenly Liberty : Angels are free, but 'tis to Duty, not Rebellion ; and here will come in the surest Mark, and the best Evidence of our Election, *1 Joh. 3. 7, 10.* *Little Children, let no Man deceive you ; he that doth righteousness is righteous, &c. in this is manifest the children of God and the children of the Devil.* *1 Joh. 1. 6.* *If we say we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we do but lye.* *2 Pet. 2. 19.*

Mod. I believe, that in many things *Philadelphus* is in the right ; Duties are means which God hath appointed for us to walk to Heaven in ; and those that belong to him he will give them Faith and Repentance, and will by his Grace overpower their Hearts that they shall obey him in all his Holy Precepts : I also believe that the *New Covenant* includes Conditions, something to be done by us that believe ; for though the Love of God, the Suffering of Christ was wholly free, yet the Saving Fruits and Benefits by
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the Suffering of Christ, doth not actually become ours upon the bare shedding of his Blood, till it be receiv'd by Faith; for his Death doth not necessarily save any, but only as God the Father, Son, and Spirit shall think fit to communicate and dispense with the Issues of them; as he that pardons an Offender, may bring him to Terms before he pardons him; and he that dispenseth Crowns and Scepters to unworthy Persons, may require Homage and Observance from them, without rendering it no Act of Grace. As to the Law, I say we are not justified by that, but by Christ alone receiv'd by Faith, and that it is necessary that Godly Preachers should teach the Moral Law, or the Doctrine of Good Works, as the Doctrine of Faith; for Satan is a deadly Enemy to both.

Philad. Well said, *Moderatus*: indeed to what end should the Great God of Heaven give forth his Divine Laws, if they do not require our due observance? for the Life of Christianity is not barely a Speculative, but an active Life, and does as seriously tell us what we are to do for Christ, as well as what we are to receive from him.

Mar. There are many that lead sober Lives, yet may, nay shall go to Hell for all their Morality; 'tis not that will save them.

Philad. I believe so too; but why should
you

you condemn honest Men fearing God, as only Moral Men, and as such who must certainly go to Hell, yet others must escape it that are guilty of far worse Vices, and who have been out-done by meer Heathens in their Practices? Some must question their Condition for every Sin, though never so small; but such as you that reckon yourselves true Believers, must by no means question your Condition though your Sins be never so great: No wonder to hear such expressions as these, *viz.* that if a Believer be overtaken with gross Sins, yet he blasphemes Christ that dare serve a Writ of Damnation upon him; and that if they be but Believers, and have once set their foot upon Christ, they need not stagger for the greatness of their Sins, nor their continuance in them; it seems tho you be not good Moral Men, yet you have a right to Heaven for all that.

Mod. Well, but there are many very ignorant in the Mystery of Faith; Faith hath the honour to be the Grace that apprehends the Mercy of God in Christ, and lays hold upon his perfect Righteousness, by which Persons come to be *justified and to have peace with God*, Rom. 5. 1. yea, by which Persons become the Children of God, and by which they receive Christ as tendered to them in the Gospel, and see him to be the
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end of the Law. God hath now in respect to us, cancel'd the Law, which stood as a handwriting against us, and hath by the Gospel shewed us a way whereby to be made Righteous without the Law : nay justified from those things, by which we could not be justified by the Law ; for saith the Apostle, *by the Works of the Law shall no Flesh be justified, but by Faith, or by Christ made ours by Faith ;* this was the great overthrow of the Jewish Nation, *Rom. 10.* they being ignorant of Christ's Righteousness, went to establish a Righteousness of their own, &c. this is a Righteousness without the Law, and yet witnessed to by the Law and the Prophets : and the whole Law is fulfilled in the Children of God, because Christ's Righteousness is made theirs through believing ; and I must tell you, that in many things Faith stands at defiance with Working and Doing.

Philad. I believe, *Moderatus*, these things to be true, and that it is the work of Faith to do what you say ; yet by the Scripture 'tis plainly evident, that 'tis not a bare naked Faith, a Faith that swims and floats in the Brain, or a lazy Reliance upon Christ, destroying of good Works, that can or will save any : let not any Persons flatter themselves into Misery ; for that Faith, that is barren of the Fruits of good Works, bears its own Curse ; that Faith that is not ac-

companied with good Works, is stiled a dead Faith, a Faith that can never bring us to Life, and no better than the Faith of Devils, *James* 2. 19, 20. And tho it is true, as you have said, Faith hath the Honour to be the Grace that apprehends the Mercy of God in Christ, &c. yet this is not all that Faith doth, for it sanctifies, *Act.* 26. 18. and purifies the Heart, *Act.* 15. 9. 'tis a Flesh-mortifying, and a World-conquering Faith, *1 John* 5. 4, 5. and leads forth the Soul to cleave to the Lord in obedience to his Will. Hence is it said, that *Enoch* by Faith walked with God, and *Abraham* by Faith obeyed, and went, and by Faith offer'd his Son *Isaac*: All Faith that is not such a Faith is but a fancy, or a fantastical Faith, a Faith of the most wicked and profane, that believe they shall be saved, tho they never are sanctified, and so over-look the Precept of our Lord, and Injunction of our Saviour. I may say in this case, as *Peter* in another; many, while they promise to themselves Liberty, become the Servants of Sin; so many, while they advance the Grace of Faith, destroy the Power of Godliness, not considering that they are two inseparable Companions: Persons may as well separate Light from the Sun, or Heat from the Fire, as true Faith and Holiness; but for the present let this pass. Have you any thing to say farther, to prove that God hath
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chosen some to Life, and rejected others without any respect to Faith or Holiness?

Philet. I might prove it from *Cain* and *Abel*, *Gen.* 4. 4, 5. where you may see, that the Lord had respect to *Abel* and to his Offering, and not to *Cain* and his Offering; and so *Heb.* 11. 4. *Abel* offered a more acceptable Sacrifice than *Cain*. Now, it is not said, that the Lord had respect to *Abel's* Offering, but to *Abel* and his Offering; so that if you ask me, why the Lord had respect to *Abel's* Offering, I must answer, because he had respect to *Abel's* Person: And why did he respect *Abel's* Person, but because it was his pleasure to chuse him in Christ? For had not *Abel's* Person pleased God, his Offering could not; and so the contrary of *Cain*: to *Cain* and his Offering he had no regard; *Cain* being reprobated in his Person, his very Sacrifice was abominable in the sight of God, and no less than Sin.

Philad. *Abel* did offer a more acceptable Sacrifice, and God had a respect unto it for this Reason; because *Abel* offered with a chearful Heart, and willing Mind in Faith: to which purpose 'tis said, that he brought not only of his Sheep, but of the fattest and best of them; he did not think the best of his Flock too good to serve the Lord with; what he did, was from an upright Heart,
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and for holy and divine Ends, and offer'd in Faith spiritually : But *Cain's* Oblation was of the Fruits of the Ground, and (as it seemeth) without choice or difference, and from an impure Heart, and wicked Mind, or at the best done in Formality ; so that the Lord accepting *Abel* was not the Effect of absolute Election, but sheweth the sincerity of *Abel's* heart, and the demonstration of his great Faith ; neither was *Cain's* Rejection the real effect of an irrelative Reprobation, but rather of his outward formality and inward corruption ; for afterwards the Lord said to *Cain*, *If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?* God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, and *Cain* amongst the rest.

Mar. I suppose, *Phileas*, if you could but own that rotten Notion of Universal Redemption, you might soon agree ; otherwise there's no hopes of doing any good with him, or drawing to any conclusion in this point.

Philad. *Martha*, Universal Redemption is no rotten or unsound Doctrine ; for if it be, then Christ did not die for all, which is to give the Lie to the Holy Ghost, seeing the Scriptures in great plainness and expressness of Words, assert the Redemption of all by Christ, without excepting so much as one : For to my knowledg, I never yet
read

read in the Scripture, that Christ laid down his Life for some few elect Persons only ; neither do I believe any Scripture can be produced, that affirms that Christ died only for the Elect, only for Believers ; or any Text that denieth that he died for all Men, without exception ; if it doth, shew me the place.

Philet. Doth not Christ say, *John 10. 11. I am the good Shepherd ; the good Shepherd giveth his Life for the Sheep.* Verse 15. *I lay down my Life for the Sheep :* and so *Eph. 5. 25.* where Christ is said to love his Church, and to give himself for it : Doth it not therefore follow, that he gave his Life for his Church, his Elect only ?

Philad. No, not at all ; tho Christ did lay down his Life for his Sheep (for such as hear his Voice and follow him) and loved his Church, so as to give himself for it ; yet it doth not say, that he loved no other, nor laid down his Life for none but his Sheep ; seeing the Scripture saith, he bought those that deny him : neither did Christ die for any, as they were his Sheep, as Saints, or as his Friends, but as his Enemies and Sinners, such as were polluted in their Blood, and without his gracious Undertaking for them were like to perish.

Philet.

Philet. But saith the Scripture, Christ came not to be ministred unto, but to minister, &c. and to give his Life a Ransom for many, *Matt.* 20. 28. *Rom.* 5. 15. *Heb.* 9. 28. Surely he that gave his Life a Ransom for many, shed his Blood for many, did not die for all.

Philad. What you would have these Scriptures prove, I grant you : Christ died for many, for his Church, for his Elect, for his Saints and Sheep ; yet it doth not prove, that he died for none else ; this is contrary to Scripture, Reason and Sense : for no Scripture saith, that he died for none but such ; and I may as well prove from *Gal.* 2. 20. that Christ died only for *Paul*, because he saith, that Christ loved him, and gave his Life for him, as you can prove from these Texts, that Christ died only for Saints.

Philet. Had Christ died for all, he would have prayed for all, *John* 17. 9. You have these Words, *I pray for them, I pray not for the World*, that is, the wicked Reprobates of the World : Surely, those that Christ never prayed for, he never died for ; but the Non-Elect he never prayed for, therefore he never died for them. Who can imagine, that if Christ had loved the World, so as to shed his Blood for them, that he would refuse to pray for them ? yet in *ver.* 19.

he saith, that he prayed for them that were given him of the Father, that had, or should receive his word believingly : and he said he prayed not for the World ; which World must be understood of those that were not given him by the Father, the Non-Elect ; he had no desire they should be saved. Now, those whose Salvation he prayed not for on Earth, he interceeds not for in Heaven ; and those that he interceeds not for, he purchased not with his Blood.

Mar. Our Saviour being now near his Death, he declares who he was to die for, not for all *Adam's* Posterity, but those whom the Father had given him to be his mystical Body : and for those I pray, as *ver. 9. I pray for them, I pray not for the World:* As if Christ had said, I am so far from dying for all *Adam's* Posterity, that I will not so much as pray as Mediator for any but those thou hast given me.

Philad. Could it be proved, that Christ did not pray for all, yet it doth not follow, that he did not die for all ; because no Scripture saith, Christ did not die for those he did not pray for, *Scripture Redemption freed from Restraints*, p. 75. And Dr. *Homes*, in many things a Friend of yours, yet upon *John 3. 37. p. 15.* says, When Men urge that Argument out of *John 17. 9.* Christ prayed not

not for the World, therefore he paid not for the World : The Consequence may be excepted upon many good Reasons ; for tho Christ did not pray for the World, yet he might pay for the World.

1st, Paying is giving Satisfaction, praying solicites God's Mercy.

2dly. Paying containeth a Preparation of the Plaster, necessary for Man's Salvation : Praying is the means of applying the Remedy to the Malady.

3dly. Paying Satisfaction belongs to the common Nature of Man which Christ assumeth : Praying is a special Privilege, vouchsafed to such Persons only as the Father hath given to his Son. — Thus you see one of your Favourites against you in this Case : But what if Christ did not pray for the World in this *9th Verse* ; doth it therefore follow, that he did not pray for the World at all ? Christ being now just taking his leave of the World, and about to be taken from his faithful and true Followers, and to leave them as Sheep amongst Wolves, doth therefore most earnestly recommend them to his Father : and from *Verse* the 6th to the 19th, makes mention of his Disciples only ; and then, in *verse* 20, and 21. prays for all those that should believe on him, through their Words : and in *ver.* 21, and 23. prays

for the World, that they might have a belief and knowledg of him.

Philet. Ay, but what Belief and Knowledge ?

Philad. Why, doubtless saving Knowledg; such a Faith and Knowledg as was accompanied with Salvation.

Philet. But surely, if Christ had prayed for the World, that the World might have savingly believed in him, and known him, then the World would have believed on him, and known him; because, whatsoever Christ prayed for to the Father shall certainly be granted: Christ was always heard of the Father, and the Father's Mind and Will was eternally known to the Son, and he came into the World to do the Father's Will, Now, Christ knowing that there was a World, which the Father never intended to redeem, to give him to die for, it would have been vain, yea, inconsistent with the Wisdom of Christ, to have prayed for that which stood diametrically opposite to the Will and Intention of the Father,

Philad. Christ made Intercession for Transgressors, *Isa.* 53. 12. and prayed for his Enemies, for those that crucified him, that they might be forgiven, *Luke* 23. 34. and also commanded us to pray for our Enemies, for those that persecute us, *Matt.*

5. 44. and for the World Christ prayed for, as I have proved : but it seems by what you say, that Christ did not pray for the World with his whole Heart, or with a desire to obtain what he prayed for. Now, whereas you say, that whatsoever Christ prayed for shall certainly be done, and that he was always heard, this I believe ; it was, and shall be, according to what he intended : yet when Christ prayed that the Cup might pass by him, tho he prayed very earnestly, he was not heard, because this Prayer was conditional, and with Submission to his Father's Will : and so *Heb. 5. 7.* saith of Christ, who in the Days of his Flesh, &c. How was Christ heard in this ? was he exempted from Suffering ? no, his Prayer was conditional, if the Lord will ; but he was so heard, as to get support under his Sufferings. But if whatsoever Christ prayed for, was absolutely granted, without any Qualification to fit the Creature for Mercy ; then those Jews and Gentiles that crucified him, must be forgiven, without Faith or Repentance, because Christ prayed that they might be forgiven. This would be inconsistent with the Wisdom of Christ, to pray for that which stood diametrically opposite to the revealed Will of his Father : For where do you find the Lord hath promised, that

that any shall be forgiven their Sins, whether they repent or not? you your selves grant, notwithstanding this Prayer of Christ, that the Wrath of God burned at the same instant of time, and afterwards against some of the Accusers, Condemners, Crucifiers and Mockers of Christ. *Synod of Dort. Part 2. p. 82, 83. Goodwin, p. 565.* Again, Christ prayed in this Chapter, that all those that believe in him might be one (as he and his Father were one;) yet where do you find, that Christ was heard in this, that there was no Disunion in Affection between the Saints, as there was none between him and his Father? And did not he pray the Father to keep his Disciples from Evil? can you infer from thence, that they never sinned, nor suffered? Whatsoever Christ prayed for, I believe God the Father did grant him an Answer to, according to the true intent of his Prayer.

Pbilet. Well, I could give you many Arguments, that Christ did not die for the wicked and unbelieving World, but for the Elect.

Philad. We will leave that to the Learned; yet give me leave to produce some Scriptures to prove Universal Redemption a Truth; and the first sort of Scriptures that speak the Universality of Redemption by Christ,

Christ, are *John 3. 16. God so loved the World that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life: and so John 6. 51. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but the sins of the whole World, 1 John 2. 2. God was in Christ reconciling the World to himself.* Here you see from these Scriptures, with many more that might be added, that Universal Redemption is no rotten, nor no unsound Opinion; here Christ died for the whole Word.

Philet. Ay, for what World? for the World of Believers, the World of the Elect; that shall in the successive Generations of the World believe: 'tis not to be understood in such a Comprehensive Signification, to include all the Men and Women in the World; for the World is taken two ways in Scripture; largely for all Men, and strictly in a restrained Sense for the Elect, or Believers: Taken in this Sense Christ died for the whole World; by the World understanding the Elect, dispersed up and down the World.

Philad. But where doth the Scripture speak of a World of Elect Persons, but rather the Elect are opposed to the World; as, *1 John 5. 19. we know, &c. John 14. 17. John 15. 19.* but if by the World be meant the

the Elect only, then it will follow that God gave his Son to dye for those that stood in no need of him; for God by Virtue of his Absolute Prerogative might pardon Sinners without the Death of his Son. Now for you that hold there was an absolute Election, and an absolute Reprobation consider'd under the Fall, and that without respect to Faith in Christ on the one hand, or disobedience on the other, what do you do but overthrow the Truth and real Expiation of their Sins by the Death of Christ for them? For if God in his Elective Love, did in the very Act of Election, freely, and of his meer good Will and Pleasure, irrevocably assign and give to his Elect Justification and Salvation, then Christ could not die to purchase these things for them, because they were theirs truly and of right before, and so he needed not die to bring those into Covenant with God, and to make them near by his Blood, and to make them dear Children to God, who were all this before: for those that were Elected unto Life, upon the account of their being absolutely Elected to Salvation, they are likewise upon the same account in actual favour with God, and already beloved of him, with the highest Love, and such as is peculiar to those that are the Sons of God.

But

But again; if by the word *World* be understood the Elect only, then this word *whosoever* must needs imply, that some of the Elect might possibly not believe, and so Christ must be supposed to speak at no better a rate of Wisdom and Sense than thus, God so loved the world of Believers, that whosoever of the world of Believers believe on him, shall not perish. Nay, further, if there be Salvation in Christ for none but the Elect (in your sense) then it is not true, that *whosoever believes in him shall be saved*.

But that it cannot be meant of the Elect only, read the two preceding Verses, 14, 15. with this whole Verse, and the words following: for as *Moses lifted up the Serpent*, &c. and, Ver. 17. for *God sent not his Son into the World to condemn the World*. If then we must understand the Elect here by the World, then we may read the words thus, God sent not his Son into the World to condemn the Elect, but that the Elect should be saved: this was to affirm that which none was likely to deny, or ever trouble themselves or the World about.

But again; if by the World we must needs understand the Elect only, then will the Parallel between *Moses's* lifting up the Serpent in the Wilderness, and *Christ's* being lifted up upon the Cross, run very lame: for *Moses* did not lift up the Ser-

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pent,

pent, with an intent that none should look upon it, and receive healing by it, save a small parcel; but that whosoever was stung might look upon it, and that whosoever did look upon it should receive healing thereby, *Numb.* 21. 8. Now you will hold, that all without exception are stung with Sin, will you not?

Philet. Yea, I do.

Philad. Very well; then unless Christ be lifted up with an intent, that every Man might believe on him, and every one that should believe on him, should be saved by him, he could not be said to be lifted up for the universal benefit of all those that were stung with Sin, as *Moses* lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderness, for the benefit of all that were stung with the fiery Serpent. Thus you may see that by *the World*, must needs be meant the whole Lump of Mankind; and those that take it otherwise, do greatly eclipse the Mercy, Love, and Goodness of God to all his Creatures. Very well, *Musculus* upon this place, *John* 3. 15, 16. "by World, understands the Universe of Mankind; so that here his love of the World, and his love of Man, is the same. After the same manner it is in this Redemption of Mankind whereof we spake, that Reprobates and desperately wicked Men partake not of it: 'Tis not through any defect of the Grace
" of

“ of God, nor is it meet for the sake of the
 “ Sons of Perdition it should lose the
 “ Glory and Title of a Universal Redemp-
 “ tion, since it is prepared for all, and all
 “ are called to it. *De Redemption. Gen. hu-
 mani.* Yea, *Calvin* himself upon this place,
 with other more antient and modern Ex-
 positors, take this word World in a uni-
 versal sense.

But take another Scripture, 2 Cor. 5.
 19. *God was in Christ reconciling the World to
 himself.*

Philet. Well, pray read out the whole
 Verse, and you may see cause to believe,
 that by the World is there meant the Elect,
 because, he says, *not imputing their Tres-
 passes* : Now it is plain he doth impute the
 Sins of all Men to them but the Elect on-
 ly, but unto them he doth not impute Sin ;
 therefore he reconciles unto himself none
 other but those he doth not impute Sin to,
 which are the Elect.

Besides, the word *World* signifieth only
 some part of Men in the World, and not
 the intire Universality of Men, as *Luke* 2.
 1. *Acts* 19. 27. *Rev.* 13. 3. Yea, *World* is
 put sometimes for those that believe, and
 are converted. The Bread of God is he
 that cometh down from Heaven, and giv-
 eth Life to the World ; that is, to the E-
 lect, to Believers of all ranks throughout
 the whole World : and no more is intend-

ed in any such-like Expressions.

Again, *John* 14. 31. *That the World may know that I love the Father.* And, *John* 17. 21. *That the World may believe that thou hast sent me.* By the World here we are to understand such as shall be saved.

Philad. I know the word *World* signifies only some part of the World; but where do you find the Elect called *the World*, in opposition to those that are Enemies and Strangers unto God? but it is rather put for the Wicked, who are the greatest part of the World, as *John* 1. 10. and 7. 7. & 14. 17. & 15. 19. & 16. 20. & 17. 9, 14. *1 Cor.* 11. 32. *1 John* 3. 1. & 4. 5. & 5. 4, 5. Hence the Devil is called *the Prince of the World*, *John* 12. 31. & 14. 30. & 16. 11. But that this *2 Cor.* 5. 19. cannot be meant only of the Elect, may be proved from the word *reconciling*. Reconciliation signifieth, a making those Friends that were before at variance. Now how can it be said, *That God was in Christ, reconciling to himself* those with whom he is not, nor ever was offended? Nay, he was so far from being offended with them, that he loved them with such a Love, that he did absolutely purpose (from the Fall, which was long before the coming of Christ in the Flesh) to confer Eternal Life upon them.

Besides, the Apostle is not there speaking of any inward Act of God upon the Souls of Persons, whereby they are brought to believe in Christ, whereby they come to witness their Peace with God ; *Being justified by Faith, we have Peace with God* : But he is there speaking of the Tenor of the Gospel, the word of Reconciliation which was committed unto him, and whereof he was a Minister, and tells them, *That God was in Christ, reconciling the World to himself*. The Quarrel began in *Adam*, Sin was that which set God and Man at variance, *Isa. 49. 1.* But now the Lord being minded to take whole *Adam* into Grace and Favour, and to found a Universal Covenant of Peace, was pleased to appear in Christ, that *those that were Strangers, and afar off, might be made near, yea the Sons of God*.

But I'll give you a Scripture that is far from such Objections, 'tis *1 John 2. 2.* *He is a Propitiation for our Sins ; and not for ours only, but for the Sins of the whole World*. Here you plainly see that Christ is a Propitiation for the whole World, as opposed to Believers, therefore he must needs die for all. Now these words were spoken to strengthen the Faith of those that through the subtilty of Satan, and prevailing Temptation, were fallen, or should fall into Sin, and thereby raise doubts in their Spirits, whether Christ died for them, or was a

Propitiation for their Sins, or not. Now the Apostle, to remove all doubts and fears out of their Minds, tells them, That he did not die for some few particular Men only (which might have augmented their fears) *but was a Propitiation for the Sins of the whole World.* Now this will greatly add to the Comfort, and put new Life into a sorrowful tempted Soul, one cast down under the sense of Sin, to think that Jesus Christ is a Propitiation for his Sins, being *the Propitiation for the Sins of the whole World.* But pray tell me, what could it add to the comfort of those to whom *John* wrote his Epistle, who were weak in Faith, to tell them that Christ was a Propitiation for the Sins of all his Elect ones, for some few particular Men; but a great many, yea the far greatest number, shall have no part with Christ, but shall be damned? Would not such a Doctrine rather augment their Fears than their Comforts? Would they not be ready to say, Ah, then I fear I am none of those that Christ is a Propitiation for? Therefore the Apostle puts the matter out of all doubt, by telling them that Christ by his Death became a Propitiation, or made a full Atonement for the Sins of all Men, without excepting so much as one Person in the whole World. But that Christ died for all, I prove from *1 Tim. 2. 6. Who gave himself a Ransom for all, to*
be

be testified in due time. If you look back to the Context of this Verse, you will find *Paul* exhorting his Son *Timothy*, That *Prayer and Supplication, &c. should be made for all Men*; and telling him, That *so to do, was good and acceptable in the sight of God.* And to prove that it is good and acceptable in the sight of God to pray for all, he lays down this for his ground, *That God would have all Men to be saved.* And for a further confirmation, that it is the Will of God that all Men, without exception, should be saved, he gives this reason for it; that *Christ Jesus gave himself a Ransom for all*: so that Christ's dying for all, gives us a ground for Faith to pray for all Men; which we could not do if Christ did not die for all, 2 Cor. 5. 14.

I would have you, *Philetus*, to consider 2 Cor. 5. 14. a Text that you cannot well cavil with: the Apostle thus argues; *If one died for all, then were all dead*; but one died for all, therefore all were dead. The thing that the Apostle is about to prove, is, that all were dead; and the medium to prove it is, that one died for all; so that it be clear that all Men were dead by the fall of the first *Adam*, it must be clear that Life was offered to all by the death of the second *Adam*: for if Christ died for none but the Elect, then the Elect only were dead, for the word (*all*) must signify as

many in the *minor* as it doth in the *major*, or else the Apostle's reasoning would be fallacious.

And so, *Rom. 11. 32. God hath concluded all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.* Now if this last (*all*) belongs to none but the Elect, then none but the Elect were concluded in unbelief: but it is plain that all without exception were, first or last, concluded in unbelief; therefore the Mercy was meant to all without exception.

Philet. But you know very well, that this word *all men* is not of necessity to be taken simply and universally for all without exception of any, but is very often taken in a restrained signification, when a part is put for the whole; as in *Exod. 9. 6. and all the Cattel of Egypt died*; that is, all that were in the Field: and so, *2 Sam. 16. 22. and Isa. 2. 2. and Mat. 3. 5. Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the Regions, &c.* that is, very many Men of those places: and so *John 10. 8. Act. 2. 5, 17. Act. 10. 12. Mat. 4. 23. Luke 11. 42.* with many others.

Philad. Tho it be true, that the word *all Men* is not at all times to be taken for all Men simply or universally; yet it never signifies the smallest number in comparison with a greater: however, it cannot be taken here for some of all sorts of Men, or for the Elect only, or the like, but of necessity

necessity for all Men universally. If we take it in any other sense, we make the Apostle to argue very weakly: for mind, here is first a Duty enjoyn'd, *I will that prayers, &c.* and to stir us up to so good a work, he tells us, that *'tis good and acceptable in the sight of God*, because his Will is, that all should be saved; God is so kind, so tender-hearted, that out of his love and pity, he would have all Men enjoy a happy and blessed end; and therefore in Charity we must pray for all, no Men, tho never so wicked and profane, are to be excluded from our Prayers, unless we know them to be such as have committed that unpardonable Sin against the Holy Ghost, 1 John. 5. 16. Now if by *all Men* we must needs understand some of all sorts of Men, or the Elect only, then the *all* we are to pray for, reacheth and extendeth not so far as God extendeth his Love. Again, if we must take it in your sense, then we may read the Apostle thus; *'Tis good and acceptable in the sight of God, that we should pray for all Men, without exception of any, because God would have all his Elect to be saved: surely the word all in both places is of the same extent.* Much of the same nature is 2 Pet. 3. 9. wherein the gracious and good Will of God toward all Men appeareth, there it is said, *the Lord is not willing that any should perish*; here the Apostle asserts an
unwil-

unwillingness in Christ, that any Person of Mankind whatsoever should perish; and therefore delayeth his promised coming, and exercises much patience and long-sufferance, his will and desire being, that no Person whatsoever should perish, but that all might by his patience and long-sufferance be led to Repentance: which if it be a Truth, then doubtless we must here understand *all Men*, and not restrain it to the Elect only: for the Lord is not here said to be not willing that any of his Elect should perish, but that all these should come to Repentance; but not willing that any universally should perish, but that all should come to Repentance (*viz.*) as they are Men, while they are capable of Repentance, that so they may be saved.

Philet. This Text also must be restrained to the Elect; therefore, saith the Apostle, *The Lord is long-suffering to us-wards, not willing that any of the Elect, or true Believers, should perish, &c.* and if you mind, this Epistle is writ to the Elect, to those that had obtained like precious Faith with God's Elect.

Philad. But the contrary will appear, if you consider the Persons here mentioned are those towards whom the Lord exercised much patience and long-suffering: what, are they the Elect with whom the Lord is not angry? therefore no need of patience;
for

for there is no room for patience to take place; but only in such cases, where a Person is apt to be stirred up and provoked; but now God was never offended with the Elect, but loveth them with the greatest love that can be, neither (according to your Principles) were they in any danger or possibility of perishing, therefore could not the patience and long-suffering of God have any reference to any such End, either of Salvation, or Condemnation, they having Salvation infallibly assured to them by the irrevocable Decree of God. So that let Christ's coming be long or speedy, or should they die the first moment they breath in this World, or live after never so many Sins committed, yet their Salvation being decreed of God, and that Decree irresistible, must needs produce their Salvation. Besides, if we should understand it of the Elect, then we may, without wrong to the Apostle, bring him in speaking thus, God is patient to the Elect, not willing that any of his Elect should perish, but that all the Elect should come to repentance: therefore we must needs understand, that the patience and long-sufferance of God is exercised toward those that condemn his Grace, yea, such as go on in Sin, treasuring up Wrath to themselves against the day of Wrath; yet the Lord exerciseth his goodness and forbearance and long-sufferance,

rance, that so his Goodness might lead them to repentance, *Rom 2. 3, 4.* yea, those that the Apostle calls *Vessels of Wrath fitted for destruction*, are yet endured with much long-suffering. There is nothing that makes the Lord withhold his hand of indignation against the Wicked, but the tender Compassion that is in him through Christ: and therefore is the long-suffering of God said to be *Salvation*; this is the main End and Design of God's Patience, and affording Sinners a Day of Grace, that so Grace and Mercy might be obtained; and his Goodness and Mercy leads them to repentance; and so long as God exerciseth his long-suffering towards any, they are under a possibility of Repentance. *1 Pet. 3. 19, 20.* We read that the patience and long-sufferance of God waited upon Sinners in the days of *Noah*, and all those 120 Years he afforded them means of Repentance by *Noah*, who was a Preacher of Righteousness to them: this shews that they were not under an absolute Decree of Reprobation, but rather God would have none of them to perish; if they do perish, it is through their own fault and folly.

Now this is very consistent with the Will of God, and the Mind of the Holy Ghost in other Scriptures; as *Ezek. 18. 30, 32.* and *33. 11.* we find this People was ready to affront and cavil with the most High,
much

much after that rude manner, as in *Paul's* time, in the 9th of the *Romans*; and as you and many others in these our days, who say, that *Children are made liable to Eternal Death by their Parents Transgression*, before they had any Sin of their own; notwithstanding God hath said, nay sworn, the contrary. Is it not strange to think how you complement, nay, dissemble with God? when you pray unto him, you tell him how merciful and bountiful he is to all, and when you have turn'd your backs, represent him as a hard Master, making us pay for that which we never tasted, and punishing us for that fault which he knows others had committed, with such like injurious Imputations, and horrid Blasphemies: so here, these fly in the Face of God, and charge the Death of the Wicked upon him, and boldly lay the blame at his Door, and say, *The Ways of the Lord were not equal*; tho when the Lord comes to judg every one according to their Work, the inequality will be found on their side, not on God's: for, *Psal. 145. 17. & 25. 10.* hereupon the Lord proceeds to vindicate his most righteous proceedings with the Sons of Men, and shews, that *the Son should not bear the iniquity of the Father, nor the Father the Son's, but the Soul that sins should die*; and therefore calls upon them to repent.

Where

Where now is the Man that dares charge the God of Heaven with his Destruction? Surely as God delights not in the Sin of any, so neither doth he in their Death: but if you do not believe the Lord upon his bare Word, you have his Oath, *Ezek. 33.*

11. *As I live, saith the Lord, &c. I will not your Destruction; if you perish*

* *Baxter's Call to the Unconverted, p. 152, 153, 170.*

and die in your Sins, 'tis because you chuse Destruction, your own Will is the cause of your Wo: The Lord, which cannot lie, Tit.*

1. 2. saith so; nay, he that cannot be perjur'd, *As I live*, he swears (saith *Dr. Homes*) by the choicest of Attributes, his Life, which is the Root of all others, and the excellency of his Being, and therefore carries a great weight with it, that he is in good earnest, and most cordially desires they would not perish, or die eternally; God will not eat his Word, or be forsworn. *1 Sam. 15. 29. Rom. 3. 4. Tit. 1. 2.*

Mar. You need cite no more Scriptures. I know and believe the Scripture stands full of Exhortations, and many Promises, &c. in his Revealed Will; but he hath a Secret Will contrary to his Revealed Will, relating to the same People and Object: So God would have all Men to be saved, and none to perish; by his Revealed Will; yet by his Secret Will he would have

have Millions to be damned : and tho it be his Revealed Will that all Men should believe in his Son, and all should, as you say, repent and turn to God ; yet his Secret Will is, they shall neither do the one nor the other.

Philad. I believe God hath a Secret Will and a Revealed Will, a Will that neither Men nor Angels know.

If it be God's absolute Will that the greatest part should be damn'd, it is then the duty of the greatest part of Men to go industriously to Hell and be damn'd : and to do good, would be a Vice ; to labour to attain Heaven, a Sin, because it crosseth the secret Will of God : and if it be God's Revealed Will that all should repent, and his Secret Will that very few shall, it follows from thence that it is his Will that his Will should not be done ; and that when a Reprobate saith, *Thy Will be done*, he rather curseth himself than prays for a Blessing.

And since you affirm that God hath a Secret and a Revealed Will, I would have you careful that you do not interpret his Revealed Will by what you conjecture of his Secret One, his Secret Will being a thing that cannot be known ; but rather guess at his Secret Will by his Revealed one, and so judg of his Eternal Decree by what we find in his Word concerning his Promises and Threatnings, which are the Copies
of

of his Decrees. It is very ill done of you to say, God hath a double Will, the Revealed Will being not only diverse but opposite to his Secret One, God ordaining Sin with the one, whilst he forbids it with the other; and not always willing in secret what he reveals himself will do.

So that by what you say, you had as good tell us God doth not mean as he speaks, and so make him a hypocritical Dissembler. This is a very high Affront put upon the Divine Goodness, and your Testimony is not at all to be credited, unless you have the Witness of God for you, *1 Joh. 5.* For whosoever delivers any thing for a Divine Truth, if it be contrary to what is revealed to us in the Scriptures of Truth, it ought to be rejected as Diabolical Suggestions; all things of this nature must be warranted by the Word. Let our Hearts be never so strongly inclined to believe it; yea, let Persons pretend never so much to the Spirit, and to receive new Light, yet if it be contrary to the Spirit of God speaking in the Scriptures, 'tis no better than a delusion of the Devil; therefore *to the Law, and to the Testimony, Isa. 8. 20. John 16. 13, 14, 15. 1 John 4. 6.* Now seeing by this your Speech you make the pure and holy God (who hateth and detesteth, yea, forbids and punisheth Hypocrisy and Dissimulation in Man, *1 Pet. 1.*

15. *Psal.* 51. 6. 1 *John* 3. 18.) insincere, and a great dissembler in his Word, professing one thing, and intending another; which Imputation consists not with his Honour, Justice, and Mercy, which is always one with his Will, and his Will always the same, and not two opposite Wills. I therefore challenge a proof for what you say, or I shall record your words as blasphemous.

Philet. I cannot prove it in those positive terms, but if you look 1 *Sam.* 2. 30. it may give us some grounds to think so; *I said indeed, that thy House should walk before me for ever; but far be it from me, &c.* Here you see the Lord said one thing and decreed another; and so *Jonah* 3. 4. where *Jonah* in positive words asserts it to be the revealed Will of God; *Yet 40 days and Nineveh shall be destroyed*: yet it was the secret Purpose, Decree or Will of God that it should not. Yea, and so far as the Prophet could conceive, and he had already manifested his Counsel, he purposed to overthrow the City; but yet the Lord had indeed determined to preserve it.

Philad. I called for a proof, that God hath a Secret Will, and a Revealed Will, contradictory to each other, relating to one and the same Persons and Things; and instead of that you bring two Texts that make nothing to the purpose; that of

Jonah concerning *Niniveh* sheweth, that God's Will, whereof one part revealed and preached by *Jonah* was, that *Niniveh* should be destroyed within 40 days if the Inhabitants thereof repented not, but remained in an obdurate and impenitent State; and the other part of God's Will which was kept secret and concealed was this, that it should not be destroyed if it did repent within that time; so that that part of God's Will that was revealed, and the other part kept secret and concealed, was one and the same, and tho delivered in positive words, yet there was a Condition implied in them, tho not expressed. That *Niniveh* was not destroyed at that set time which the Lord threatned they should, plainly shews that his Purposes and Threatnings were conditional: Upon supposition of their Impenitence he threatned to destroy them; but when they repented, he promised to preserve them: this you know by what *Jonah* did when he withdrew to see what God would do with the City, and by what the King and People did; they understood the whole Will of God concerning them, tho but part thereof was vocally revealed: therefore I heartily advise you, to detest that vile School-distinction, of a Secret and Revealed Will in God opposite one to the other; so that by his Revealed Will he would have none to
perish,

perish, but professes his unfeigned desire after the Salvation of those that perish, and seems to be burdened in himself, and lament over those that stubbornly run in destructive courses, as *Deut.* 5. 29. *Psal.* 81. 13, 14. *Isa.* 48. 7. & 65. 2. *Jer.* 44. 4, 5. *Mat.* 23. 37. and yet by his Secret Will he hath no desire after their Salvation: Nay, he's so far from willing or desiring their Salvation, that he hath grounded and settled Intentions to destroy them for ever. By his Revealed Will he would have all Men to repent and believe in his Son, and by his Secret Will, the contrary: Now if there be any Secret Will in God whereby he willeth the destruction of any, at the same time that he willeth the Salvation of all, these two Wills must needs contradict one another; and of two contraries, if one be good, the other is bad; and so in God's Secret and Revealed Will, if one be good, the other is bad.

But surely, if God injoyns Repentance, Faith, and Obedience unto all Men, with Promises upon their complying with his Will they shall be saved, as *Mark* 16. 16. *Acts* 3. 19. *John* 20. 21. then he doth not will with a Secret Will, the condemnation of any: for 'tis clear that his Revealed Will runs, that he would have all men every where to repent, &c. and certainly his Revealed Will must needs be one with his Se-

cret Will, or else we shall represent the great God of Truth as false as Man: for if God's Word, which is his Revealed Will, be no Interpretation of his mind and meaning, then it is not true; for that speech that is no signification of the Mind is a lie: *God's love to Mankind*, page 96. this is properly lying (saith *Lombardus* as quoted by *Morton*, Page 51) when a Man speaks any thing contrary to his mind. And saith *Aquinas*, this is properly to lie, when a Man signifies in outward words, another thing than that which he thinketh in his mind. And whereas you charged Universal Redemption as favouring of Popery, pray what greater piece of Popery than their mental Reservation, and wicked Equivocation, saying one thing, and meaning another? Have there not been whole Volumes writ to detect it? But if professing one thing while the contrary is intended, be Holy in God; why not in them? or if some things in God may be Holy which are abominable in Man, by what Rule must we distinguish between Holy things in God which are Holy also when found in Men, and such other Holy things in God, which when found in Men are abominable? Is it not of dreadful consequence to impute that to God, which common and approved Reason judges to be unrighteous in Men? His Works are so just, his Word so pure, and

so merciful is he in his Ways, that there is no appearance to the contrary ; and in performing his Covenant and Promises, he is most highly faithful and constant, and is in no wise a Dissembler, that under such most affectionate Expressions of Love and Kindness to Man, should conceal settled Purposes and Intentions of doing them the greatest Mischief : Surely in God's Revealed Will cannot possibly lurk any mental Reservation or Insincerity.

What a dishonour and a crime of a high Nature would it be, if Persons should deal thus with an earthly King, as you do with the King of Heaven ? Suppose a King should set forth a Proclamation of a General Pardon to all his Subjects that had offended him, without excepting High Treason, or any other Offence whatsoever ; yet if they will but repent, submit to his Mercy, sue forth their Pardon, they shall have it : And now after all this is proclaimed throughout the Nation, others should assume to proclaim that which is quite contrary, that tho it was the King's Pleasure to offer such a General Pardon, yet it was the King's Secret Will (yea, before the Proclamation came forth) that the greatest number should never reap any benefit by it. Can any Man, indued with reason and understanding, any ways think that such Officers proclaimed that which made for

the King's Honour ? Or if it was a Truth, would not the Soul of a Person abominate such pretending to Kindness and Mercy ? And now whereas the King of Kings, the God of Heaven hath vouchsafed an Act of Grace, and in tender compassion and pure love to all, hath sent forth a General Pardon tendering his Grace to all, telling us, that for his Son's sake he will freely and fully pardon all our Sins whatsoever, if we will but accept of it ; and if we sue forth our Pardon, we shall have it freely ; and the God of Heaven, to make this known to the World, has sent forth his Messengers to proclaim these glad-tidings to all without excepting one (Glory to God high on Earth, Peace, Good-will towards all) which was proclaimed by a Heavenly Herald. And how hath the Lord, both in the Old and New Testament, proclaimed and professed himself a God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in Goodness and Truth : yea, how earnestly doth he allure Persons to repentance, promising them pardon of Sins with all the Blessings of the World to come, and seriously and solemnly protests and swears, that he desires not their Death, he would not have one Soul of them perish. But now if after all this others should come and say, that tho it be the Revealed Will and Pleasure of God, that such a General Pardon should be
divulged

divulged to the World, yet it was the Secret Will of God, yea before this Proclamation came forth, it was decreed, that he would cast out of his favour and devote to Eternal Burning, millions of his most excellent Creatures, Men, Women, and Children, that never offended him, any otherwise than Children may offend before they are born: Do you think such words any ways advance the Glory, Holiness, and Excellency of God? No; thus under pretence of glorifying of him, you most dishonour him; as if God did not really intend that Grace and Good to Man which in his Word he tenders to them; and so Persons must be damned, because God did not really and in good earnest call them, which is a thing more fit to be applied to Cheaters and Juglers, than to the righteous, pure, single and secret Will of God. Is it not pity you should impute that to the Lord, which is proper to none but the worst of his Creatures? surely all God's Decrees are perfectly just, and whatsoever he wills is perfectly good, neither can he will any thing but what in it self is Righteous, Just, and Equal; and to say of things unequal in themselves, yet done by God, that they are just, is a great dishonour to him. *Wither's Paraphrase on the Lord's Prayer.* How dare you speak of such a Will to be in God which he hath no where revealed in his Word? His

Secret Will, how come you to know it ; and if it be revealed, how is it Secret ?

Philet. God by his Revealed Will sheweth that he approveth of the Salvation of such Persons that perish, as Good, and sheweth what Persons ought to do, and what would be well-pleasing to God was it found in them : yet he doth not will it with his Effectual Will ; for if he did, he would give forth strength, and such a power that they should not but believe.

Philad. These are but the perplexing Subtilties of the Schools, and but Briers and Thorns to intangle Men in endless disputations : What, doth God approve of the Salvation of Persons as good, by his Revealed Will, and hath he by his Secret Will positively determined and decreed from Eternity their destruction, which is quite contrary to what he approves, takes pleasure and delight in ; what woful work is here ? As to his Effectual Will, if you mean by it his absolute irresistible Power in converting of Sinners beyond all possibility of perishing ; or the irresistible efficacy and predetermining Power of Grace ; this is such a Will as you cannot prove to be in God.

Philet. No surely ; whatsoever the great and glorious God hath purposed and intended he will do, shall certainly be effected by his Glorious Power. 'Tis a dishonour to
the

the most High God, as if he was uncertain to effect what he purposeth and intends to do; for seeing God's Power is infinite, and he being no less than the Omnipotent God, he cannot fail or fall short to effect whatsoever he wills and pleaseth to do in the conversion of any he pleaseth to convert, or in any other thing that is his Will and Pleasure to effect and do, his Counsel shall stand, and he will do all his Pleasure.

Philad. 'Tis true, God is Omnipotent, and can do whatsoever he pleaseth, tho all Creatures opposed him, yet God can many times do more than indeed he ever will; his Will is regulated, and is acted forth agreeable to his Wisdom, Righteousness and Justice, and according to his Divine Nature; and as God hath made Man a rational Creature, so he very seldom forceth Man to repentance against his will; yet is the Lord pleased so to will the Salvation of all, yea with such an effectual Will, that he doth that which is of a proper tendency, and sufficient thereunto, that unless they wickedly and wilfully oppose the Means, they should be saved; yea, so far as is any ways meet for him to act, or assist, towards their Salvation; Isa. 5. 4. *What could I have done more?* that is, tho God could have done more than he did, yet it was not consistent to that method and stated order of things; but more of this hereafter.

Mar.

Mar. No Text of Scripture must be understood as to make God Impotent, instead of Omnipotent, or in the least reflect upon the Sovereignty, Immutability, and Omnipotency of God, as if he could be disappointed in bringing to pass what he hath purposed and intends to do.

Philad. Nor no Scripture must be so interpreted, as to disparage or undervalue the Love and Bounty of God to all Men, the general tenour of them, representing in the highest degree the Goodness of God; and as God is perfect in Power, perfect in Wisdom, so also perfect in Goodness, yea, Perfection it self: any Defect is inconsistent with a perfect Being; and above all, a Defect in Goodness, which gives a Value to the other Attributes of God. If therefore some things in Providence, or some Passages appear in Scripture that we cannot exactly reconcile, but that they seemingly oppose this Point, we ought to impute that to our deficiency in understanding, and to try if they may not reasonably bear another sense, or reserve them to be understood hereafter, than to adhere to them in contradiction to the general Tenour of Scripture, and the Light of Nature and Reason, seeing nothing can be alledged which with that same clearness oppugns the perfection of Goodness in God, as others may which assert it. And seeing the Nature of
Good-

Goodness consists in the taking a pleasure in the Happiness of others, and in promoting it : We must conclude from hence, that God hates no Man, but loves and desires the Happiness of all Men ; and that for his Will-sake he reprobates none either from Eternity or in Time : to think otherwise, greatly opposes God in all his Attributes, it opposes his Mercy. God is in Scripture declared to be a *merciful God*, *Exod. 34. 6.* *1 John 4. 16.* *God is Love ; yea called the Father of Mercy, and God of all Consolation ; yea, rich in Mercy, Ephes. 2. 4. abundant in Mercy : Pray see Psal. 33. 5. He loveth Righteousness, and Judgment ; the World is full of the Goodness of the Lord : And Mica. 7. 18. He retains not his Anger for ever, because he delighteth in Mercy. And, Psal. 145. 9. the tender Mercies of God are over all his Works.* But how God could delight in Mercy, and how his tender Mercies are over all his Works, I do not understand. What, doth God delight in Mercy, when he hath made such a Decree, which sheweth more Severity towards poor Man than Mercy ? Are his tender Mercies over all his Works, when for one only Sin, and that once committed, and that not in their own Persons, he hath shut the greatest part of Mankind up under invincible Sin and Damnation ? not affording them a Mediator, which was the greatest and most choice

choice Act and Manifestation of God's Mercy that he could bless the World withal. Now all the Attributes of God must take place upon Man : And I beseech you tell me where the tender Mercy of God takes place upon those for whom Christ did not die ; for you will own there is Mercy in God, as well as Justice, do you not ?

Philet. Yea, I do ; and God by his Decree doth fully manifest both Mercy and Justice ; his Justice to the Reprobate, and his Mercy to the Elect.

Philat. Well ; but do you think that one Attribute of God destroys another ? Doth Justice in God wholly devour and eat up his Mercy, leaving no room to take place upon some Persons ?

Philet. God who is the Supreme Lord of all, may do what he will with his own ; when Man had sinned, he was at perfect liberty whether he would shew Mercy to any or not ; and if he had made no provision at all for any of fallen Man, it could not be termed an Act of Unmercifulness.

Philad. I did not ask you what an Almighty God can or might do, but I ask you how or wherein the Goodness and Love of God is manifested to those for whom Christ did not die ? Or how God, who is the Perfection of all Goodness, Mercy, and Bowels of Pity, can be said to bear any Love, Good-will, or Affection,
unto

unto those (before any personal or actual Sins by them committed) upon whose ruin he was so bent, that he hath wholly left them without all possibility of escaping Eternal Misery and Torment? How can Mercy stand with such a Decree? Doth not the Apostle *Paul*, Tit. 3. 4. speak of the appearance of the Love of God our Saviour toward all Men? But can there be any appearance of Love and Kindness to those for whom Christ did not die, and whom God was resolved from Eternity to exclude from all parts and fellowship in Eternal Life? Was not there as much Mercy, Kindness, and Good-will shewed to the very Devils, as to such Men? Nay, Mr. *Keach* tells us, “That if Christ did not die for
 “all, God deals more severely with many
 “of *Adam’s* Off-spring, than he dealt
 “with the Devils, because they were ex-
 “cluded from all terms of Reconciliati-
 “on for their own actual Disobedience;
 “but Mankind only, for the Sins of *A-*
 “*dam*, made theirs by Imputation, and
 “as they partake of the same Nature:
 “Neither is their Condemnation aggrava-
 “ted by Christ’s coming, as those Persons
 “are for whom Christ did not die. *Youth’s*
Celestial Guide. Much to the same purpose
 you may see *God’s Love to Mankind*, pag.
 136, 137, 138. That altho the Devils are
 set forth in Scripture for the greatest Spec-
 tacles

tacles of God's ireful Severity ; yet is God more merciful to them than to such Men : and though they are both sure to be damned ; yet in three things Man is in a far worse condition by such a Decree.

1. In their appointment to Hell, not for their own personal Sins, for which only the Devils are damned ; but for the Sin of another that lived and sinned long before they were born.

2. In their unavoidable destination to endless Misery, under a colour of the contrary : the Devils, as they are decreed to Damnation, so they know it and look for no other : But Men that are appointed to Wrath, are yet fed up with hopes of Salvation, and made to believe, that if they perish, 'tis not because God would not have Mercy upon them, but because they will not be saved, when indeed there is no such matter.

3. In their Obligation to believe, and the aggravation of their Misery by not believing : The Devils, because they must be damned, are not commanded to believe in Christ, nor is their punishment heightened by their not believing ; but miserable Men, who by this Decree have no more liberty to escape Hell than the Devil, must yet be tied to believe in Christ ; and have their Torments increased, if they believe not : May we not say, Where was the found-

founding of the Lord's Bowels, and his Mercy ? Were they not restrained? *Isa. 63. 15.*

Now tho I grant you, that God's Mercy is his own, and he might give it to whom he please, I do also grant, that when Man had sinned, God was not obliged, but was absolutely free and at perfect liberty whether he would shew Mercy to any or not : The Love of God in Christ was undeserved, undesired, and every way free indeed ; neither had it been unmerciful if God had made no provision for fallen Man.

But now seeing he was pleased to enter into a Covenant of Peace with Man, tho under no constraint or Obligation, and to give his Son a Ransom, not for a few, but all, as a means whereby his poor Creatures might be saved, and hath promised Mercy, without exception, should be vouchsafed to all that believe in his Son, and hath bound it with an Oath, that *he desireth not the death of a Sinner*, that no cruelty is in him ; but that he is a God gracious and merciful, thereby to beget in us such amiable thoughts of himself as might incline us to love him with all our heart and strength ; and without the least scruple resign up our selves to his Will :

Now, I say, since God, who was absolutely free, hath made such Promises of Mercy to all that believe in his Son, this his Promise binds him to perform it ; he cannot deny

deny himself, he's not like unto frail Man; he will not eat his own words; so that now he is not at liberty to deny Mercy to those to whom he in his Word hath promised to shew Mercy, neither can he do it: for we may modestly affirm, there are some things God cannot do; God cannot lie, he cannot deny himself, neither can he deal unfaithfully and unjustly in his Promises, nor go contrary to his Will revealed in his Word: so till you prove by the Word of God, that he hath made no provision for the Salvation of all Men by the death of Christ, all you say proves nothing; neither do you yet shew me where the great Attribute of God's Mercy takes place upon those for whom Christ did not die.

Philet. Doth not the Mercy of God wonderfully appear in this, that when Man had sinned, and thereby run himself so far in debt, beyond any possibility to pay, but was liable to have been eternally a Prisoner, without any redemption from thence, till he had paid the utmost Farthing, neither Men nor Angels being able to make God amends for the wrong Man had done him, *Psal.* 49. 7, 8. And whereas God being the most Sovereign Lord, and no ways a Debter to any of his Creatures, being not constrained by any inward Necessity, or outward Force, to shew mercy to any, being wholly at his own choice whether he would

would shew Mercy to any, having cause enough to cast off Man for his disobedience, as he did the fallen Angels; doth it not argue and prove more abundantly the rich Grace and Goodness of God, in providing for the Salvation of a few, than in making no provision for any, but leaving them to perish in their Sins?

Philad. 'Tis true, 'tis an act of Grace and Mercy for God to make provision for the Salvation of any by Christ, and to cast his Love upon any of the degenerate Sons of *Adam*, when he passed by the Apostate Angels, being invested with a power to shew Mercy to whom he please: But certainly if to shew Mercy to a few amongst the many millions of millions of poor perishing Creatures, renders God gracious and merciful, how prevailing must that Love be which hath made such rich and full provision for the Salvation of all Men, who unless they wilfully neglect so great Salvation, shall most certainly be saved? for if the providing for the Salvation of a few out of many, renders him most gracious and lovely, then if he had refused to make provision for any, certainly the greater the number for whom this provision was made is, the more lovely and gracious doth God appear. Pray take heed you do not bring your Soul under guilt, by denying Christ's Death for all, which is the greatest illustration of his

Love and Mercy to Sinners : for in my understanding, 'tis a great injury done to the Goodness and Mercy of God to affirm, that he hath eternally decreed the reprobation of all mankind except a very few in comparison of the rest.

Mar. None can be damned but those whose damnation God wills to glorify his Justice ; for God wills the Salvation of all that are saved, and he wills the Damnation of all that are damned : and tho it is certain that the Lord is gracious and full of compassion, and of great mercy, yet he hath *mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth*, Rom. 9. 18. It's true, there is such infinite Mercy in God, that he could have pardoned all the Angels that sinned, and could have saved all *Adam's* Posterity : if he had pleased, there might have been no Hell, no place of Torment for Devils or Men ; if he had pleased, there might have been no place but Heaven for all the Angels, and all the Children of Men to sing *Hallelujahs* to Eternity : but we must not order what God shall do, how he shall exert and put forth his Mercy ; but let his Grace and Mercy be adored for ever, in that he saves any that have sinned, and his holy Justice ador'd in punishing so many with Eternal Damnation for Sin. And God hath his Glory, not only from them that are saved, but also
from

from them that perish; in the one the Glory of his Grace, in the other the Glory of his Justice.

Philad. Who questions these things? but you still avoid the Question so often urged, *viz.* Wherein the great Attribute of God's Mercy takes place upon those for whom Christ did not die?

Philet. You asked me if I thought one Attribute of God eat up another? And I may ask you this Question, whether you think God is made up of Mercy without any Justice?

Philad. No, I do not think so; I believe that Justice and Mercy were essentially in God before all time, and both beloved and favoured by him; and to maintain the favour and love God bore to Justice, he hath caused whole Nations to drink of the Cup of his Wrath: in this he threw the sinful down from Heaven; drowned the old World; rained Fire and Brimstone out of Heaven upon *Sodom*, &c. yea such love doth God bear to Justice, that not only Men and Angels, Citys and Nations, but Heaven and Earth and all shall fall, rather than God will not observe Rectitude and Justice, in giving to every one his due; yea so just is God, that he would not spare his best beloved Son; yea, and God is glorified by Justice as well as by Mercy; and should there be any jarring and disagreeing in the

Divine Being, all would run into confusion, yea, Heaven and Earth would be a Chaos : but certainly there is nothing more lovely, than when Justice and Mercy do imbrace and kiss each other ; God hath promised in Judgment to remember Mercy, and that he doth not willingly afflict and grieve the Children of Men ; the Divine Goodness is such, that he always pities where he must punish, *Lam.* 3. 33. and is very unwilling to strike but from mere necessity ; he seldom or never makes any Patterns of his Wrath, but such as are despisers of his Mercy, and forgetters of his Favours, yea, and after a long time of forbearance, *Isa.* 65. 2. So tho God hath a respect to Justice as well as Mercy, and one is as much beloved as the other, yet in the expressions of his Love to the Sons of Men, 'tis said to be above all his Works : But where hath Mercy any place upon those that are made the butts of God's Displeasure ? yea, view but the Scriptures, wherein the Mercy and Goodness of God are legible to all, and you will find that his love to sinful Man is truly inconsistent with the Nature of those absolute Decrees you speak of : see *Hos.* 11. 8. *How shall I give thee up, O Ephraim ?* &c. Here the Lord speaks as if to punish a sinful and disobedient People went to his very heart ; yea, he is so unwilling to inflict Punishment, that his very Bowels are moved

as is intimated, by turning within him. Consider the case of *Sodom*, when upon *Abraham's* earnest expostulation with the Almighty, the Divine Bounty rose so high, that had there been in those Five great Cities, but Ten righteous (the effectual Prayers of a righteous Man carry such a kind of Omnipotency a long with them, that they tie, as 'twere, God's hands from Judgments and open them to Mercy; *Let me alone, said God to Moses*) nay, it may be conjectured, that not only Ten, but Five, or less, might have prevailed for the saving those Citys. Consider the Case of *Nineveh*, *Jona. 1.* likewise *Mat. 23. 37.* *O Jerusalem, &c.* Certainly this Scripture doth highly speak forth God and Christ's great Love to Mankind, Sorrow mixt with Love and Pity: and you shall find few or none commenting upon this text, but say, Christ shewed abundance of Love to these poor *Jerusalemites*. Mr. *Keach* in his *Scripture Tropes*, having shewed the compassion of Christ to Sinners under the similitude of a Hen, saith, "that Jesus Christ was moved with
 " the greatest compassion imaginable to
 " wards the poor Jews, and *Jerusalemites*,
 " whom he was first sent to, and came to-
 " seek and save; this is signified by that
 " wonderful passion that seized upon his
 " Spirit, &c. And having shewed with
 " what a mournful Voice the Hen calls her

“ Chickens to her when there is danger,
 “ faith, so Christ calls to poor helpless and
 “ impenitent Sinners, very often with a
 “ mournful Voice, and tears in his eyes;
Luke 19. 42. And from thence doth infer
 it to be no better than presumption, for a-
 ny to dare to charge their eternal ruin upon
 God. And a little after, “ Who will pity
 “ Sinners if they perish at last and be dam-
 “ ned, when all is from their own vile stub-
 “ borness? And in his *Youth's Guide* he says,
 “ That God's commiserating the sad estate
 “ of perishing Sinners, argues there was
 “ once Mercy extended to them, which
 “ could not be if Christ died not for all.
 And in *God's Love to mankind*, page 132.
St. Austin faith, “ Our Lord did compare
 “ himself to a Hen, rather than to any
 “ other creature, because of her singular
 “ expression of Love to them when out of
 “ sight.

Mar. But here's a distinction which you
 either do not understand, or have not con-
 sidered, as touching our Lord Jesus; for he
 hath a Will distinct from his Will as God:
 Now as Jesus Christ was Man, he wept;
 and as he was Man, he willed *Jerusalem*
 Salvation; but as he was God, he wills it
 not, for it was his determinate Will that
Jerusalem should be destroyed as an effect
 of their Sins: therefore tho Christ did
 weep for *Jerusalem*; nay, had he prayed

for them, God's unchangeable Will must take place ; *Tho Moses and Samuel stood before me, &c. Jer. 15. 1.*

Philad. I grant, tho as I said before, that faithful Prayer greatly prevails with God ; yet in some cases the most importunate Prayer of the most upright will not become effectual ; where Iniquity is grown up to that height of malignity, and desperate sinfulness, that should not God punish it he would deny himself, and cease to be God, as he saith in *Ezek 14. 14.* that *tho these three Men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, stand before me, and would intercede, their intercession for others will become fruitless, where Justice calls for a cutting off: but your distinction about a twofold Will in Christ, I look upon to be but barely notional ; and nothing but to gratify Peoples pregnant fancies (to say no worse) and I doubt such fancies may prove of dangerous consequence ; for by this, Christ in the Flesh had one End in his weeping, and endeavouring to gather Jerusalem, and in his Spirit another : Christ, as he was Man, would have saved Jerusalem ; but as he was God, he wills their destruction : Christ, as he was Man, was filled with bowels of pity to their Souls and Bodys, and would have gathered them under the Wings of his Grace, and would have blessed them, by turning them every one from their Iniquities,*

Acts 3. *ult.* but as he was God, he had no more love for them than for Wolves and Tygers: Christ, as he was Man, wept for the Bodys of those that should be destroyed by the *Romans*; but as he was God, he had decreed the *Romans* should destroy their Bodys, and the Devil should have their Souls to Hell: Christ in the Flesh is good and gracious, seeking the Salvation of all; but as God he hath consigned millions of Men, Women, and Children, to perpetual Torments for *Adam's* single transgression.

What, is Christ divided? is not Christ in the Flesh and in the Spirit, *the same yesterday, to day, and for ever*? Was not the Word made Flesh, and was it not united to the Divine Nature, and anointed with the Holy Spirit above measure; and did not he satisfy and bear our Sins, as he was Man, in our Nature? did not he die as Man, and rise in our Nature; and hath he not carried our Nature into Heaven? And from this full Christ, in Flesh and Spirit, God-man, we receive Grace for Grace. Leave off such things, and draw not People into a Labyrinth of Errors by such trifling Distinctions, lest you draw some to account the Blood of the Covenant, where-with they are sanctified, an unholy thing, and make all the Precepts of the Gospel uncertain whether they be the Will of God

or not ; or whether Christ when he prayed to his Father for his People, or for Sinners, prayed as a Mediator, or as Man only ; yea, give footing to that Opinion, which begins to evidence it self too much in many, even denying the personal Union of God and Man in Jesus Christ, in whom *the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily*, Col. 2. 9. which did influence and give a value and worth to all things done for us by the Manhood ; and therefore his Righteousness and his Blood was called, *the Righteousness and Blood of God*, Acts 20. 28. 1 John 3. 16. Rom. 10. 3. Christ as he was God-Man, and our Mediator, what he did upon this account, in the Flesh, he did in the Spirit also. Now in this place where Christ bewailed *Jerusalem's* state with tears, either they flowed from true inward compassion, or they did not ; if the first, then Christ in the Flesh and in the Spirit, willed one and the same thing, and had no distinct Will for *Jerusalem's* Salvation as Man, different from his Will as God ; but if the second, then his tears were only feigned, and his bewailing nothing but dissimulation, which is a capital Sin to affirm. And tho the Lord was resolved to bring *Jerusalem* to desolation, by delivering them into the hands of their Enemies ; yet as you say, and say truly, it was an effect of their Sins, the neglect of the Day
of

of their Visitation, mocking his Messengers, and stoning them that were sent to her to have drawn her from the evil of her ways, and for crucifying the Lord of Life, thereby filling up the measure of her Iniquity. So tho the Lord brought her to desolation, yet Punishment is rather his refuge than his choice ; and his defence against Sin, than the hurt of his Creatures ; and the Sinner with his own hands most cruelly pulleth down punishment upon his own head : for the evil of Sin, and the evil of Suffering are Twins ; or rather Sin gives birth and being to the other : God never inflicted the least punishment on any merely as Men, but as workers of Evil, as continuing sinful and disobedient. So that it was *Jerusalem's* actual Sins, and her refusing to be healed that brought her to ruin, and not any irresistible Decree of the Almighty ; for you may as well deny the Being of a God, as entertain a belief, that he takes pleasure in the death and destruction of his Creatures. His Nature is perfect Goodness, and he is a stranger to Cruelty ; and all the expressions of Love and Good-will in Christ to poor Sinners are such, that they neither admit nor are consistent with fraud or falshood : so that yet you have not told me where the Attribute of God merely takes place upon those that God is resolved, against all means possible

sible to be used, to punish by his Decree, as you use to say.

But before I leave this, let me ask you one Question more, which is this, Ought not, or do not all Men stand ingaged to love God?

Philet. To love God? yea, who should they love if they do not love God?

Philad. Ay, but I ask you for what Reason?

Mar. There may be many Reasons given; the receiving the good things of this Life may engage all Men to love God.

Philad. Yea; but you will not own that God gives the good things of this Life, with any good intention to the greatest number, but rather gives them to them to heighten their misery; doth God intend any good to the Souls of such by what he gives?

Mar. No; yet are they to be accountable for the abuse of them.

Philad. But you hold, that God did decree they should abuse them accordingly; and for that end were they given to them, that so the abuse of them might heighten their misery; this is but like the Proverb, *Give a Man Roastmeat, and beat him with the Spit*: Can any Man become grateful, or be tied in the Bonds of Love and Gratitude to such a Man, that should feast him for a while, yet after condemn him to Death and Destruction?

Philet.

Philet. The Apostle saith, 1 *John* 4. 19. *We love him, because he first loved us*; but this is meant of the Elect only.

Philad. Why should you go about to confine the Lord's Mercy, which is altogether Infinite, and as incomprehensible as his Divine Essence? why should you thus contract the Divine Goodness, whose Mercies are not only exalted above our Conceptions, but also above and over all his Works? Therefore do not presume to measure the Lord's Mercys by your narrow conceit, nor labour to make it run into a lesser Channel than the Lord intended.

But God's great Love to all Men, in giving his Son to die for them, is the ground and cause of their Love to God again: True love must first spring from the knowledg of God's Love to them; neither can I think that any Men in the World will ever heartily and cordially love God, unless they believe that God Almighty had designs of Love to them; yea, so far loved them, as to send his Son to die for them: otherwise instead of loving and living to God, it would tend to a most horrid and desperate alienation of the Hearts of poor Creatures from their dear and ever-blessed Creator. For how is it possible that the poor Creature should develt himself of those Delights and Pleasures of this Life, and intirely love and delight him-

himself in God and his blessed Will, if he knew, or had strong grounds of fear, that before he made him, or without respect to his Sins, or unworthy carriage in the least, he so far hated him, as to resolve, against all Mediation whatsoever, to cast him out of his sight, and to doom him to suffer the Vengeance of Eternal Fire?

“ You may preach up God’s Sovereignty, pronounce Justice and Judgment (as some have done) till they have brought Despair and Hell into the Souls of many, and beget more Fear than Love, make God feared as a Tyrant; but ’tis the making known Christ’s meek Condescension, Long-suffering, and the super-excellent Amiability of free Love and tender Mercy, that soonest and most effectually works in us Repentance of our Sins, and inclines us to love him that first loved us. *Wither’s Paraphrase upon the Lord’s Prayer.*

Who is able to persuade Men by Arguments, or move them by Threatnings, to love God, whose love to them in particular is doubtful? Do you think it can, or ever will be a motive for Persons to love God, to tell them, That before all Worlds, or before they were born, or there were any possibility of offending him in any manner, it was decreed, that the greatest number of *Adam’s* Off-spring should be eter-

eternally reprobated and damned ? And tho he had provided means whereby Man might have been saved ; and that the worth and value was so great, that it was sufficient for the Redemption of thousands of Worlds ; yet then it was decreed, that very few should have any benefit thereby, when they had done their utmost they could do to obtain it ? Is it possible that Men should truly love God, while they apprehend him as an Enemy bent in an unappeasable manner to destroy them, and that to Eternity ? can any thus be induced to love him, or live to him ? Thus your Doctrine cuts asunder the very Sinews of Religion, discourageth Holiness, and encourageth Profaneness ; for by your Opinion Heaven shall unavoidably be obtained by those that are elected, and Hell must be as certainly endured by those that are reprobated ; and a Man may as well stop the Sun in its course, and mete out the Heaven with a Span, as force the Lord to revoke his Decree. Truly if poor Man lies under such a rigid Fate, all that he can do for the obtaining Heaven, or avoiding Hell, is but a piece of industrious Folly. Why should we take upon us a strict course of Life ? why should we submit to Divine Precepts, or address our selves to God by Prayer ; and like good *Jacob* wrestle with him for a Blessing ? to what purpose should we maintain

a warfare against Satan, Sin, and all Vice, when the greatest industry, in the use of means to obtain them, signifies nothing, if not decreed to it? May not this cause Persons to be swelled up with sorrow, and destroy the chiefest inducements to Holiness, when they shall seriously reflect upon all they had done to be purely in vain? And again, if Persons be absolutely appointed (by the immutable and irreversible Decree of the Almighty) to destruction, 'tis not all their hearing, reading, praying, Works of Charity, nor all mourning for Sin, nor believing neither, that can possibly procure their Salvation, damned they must be: And on the other side, if Persons be absolutely ordained to Salvation, their open contempt and neglect of all Holy Duties, their living in pleasure, and walking in ungodly courses, cannot bring Damnation upon them, they must be saved. *See God's Love to Mankind.*

What Man, rightly master of his own Reason, will ever trouble himself about such impossible or unavoidable things? 'tis in vain to repent, fruitless to weep, yea, madness to add to my own Infelicities, by denying my self of any Pleasure or Profit which I might enjoy by closing with the World, and in gratifying the sensitive Part: Or why should we take upon us a strict course of Life, endeavouring to keep
 God's

God's Commandments, and fighting with the Temptations of the Devil, and keep them under our Bodies, and bring under subjection, when all we effect by it is an honourable Nothing?

What compass we by striving therewithal?

Why spend we time in rising up to fall?

Why linger we to act so many Crimes,

To suffer over Grief so many times?

And live so many several Deaths to taste,

To be no worse, nor better at the last?

Or wherefore have we prayed, since we know

What must be, must be, tho we pray not so?

Wither's *Britain's Rememb.* p. 54.

So that your Doctrine makes all Endeavours and Undertakings of Persons, in order to the attaining Heaven and Eternal Felicities, fruitless, and highly gratifies the Devil's Interest; such an Opinion frames and fits a Soul for the Suggestions of Satan, by which he draws Souls with more ease into Eternal Misery: for will not Persons be ready to say, I am one of those that are absolutely elected to Grace and Glory, one of those that Christ died for; or I am absolutely cast away and left in the Fall, to die and perish, without a power to believe, or a Christ to believe in? If I lie under a necessity of either, why should I trouble my self about Means or Ends, since
if

if I perish by my Sins, I did but what was natural for me to do, and which I was compelled to by an overpowering necessity, and therefore I'll take my ease, and swim down the Stream of all Delights: so that your Opinion overthrowes the very Foundation of all true Piety, and gives Persons the greatest discouragement to Duties, and quite breaks the Anchor of the Soul that it cannot fix it self upon any Offers of Grace and Invitation, nor stay it self upon any Promise of Heaven upon their repenting, believing or obeying the Lord. Hope stirs up Men to begin, and to continue in well-doing. Hope is a patient and well-grounded Expectation of the fulfilling of whatsoever God hath promised: But how is the Anchor well-grounded, when notwithstanding the Promises of Heaven to all those that by patient continuance in well-doing seek for it, Men by the most vigorous undertaking for Heaven, shall be rewarded with the Wages of Death, and crowned with eternal Shame for all they have done in their Christian Progress; Is not this enough to shipwreck the Soul upon despair?

*Yea, I dare say,
This is the nearest, and the straitest way
To all Profaneness; if the Bridle gives
To Carnal Liberties, and makes the Lives*

N

And

*And Hearts of many Men so void of care;
 From hence Distractions, hence Despairings are;
 Hence Mischiefs, hence Self-murders do arise;
 Hence is it that such multitudes despise
 Good Discipline; yea, this contemned makes
 The Life of Faith, if once it rooting takes,
 Disableth pious Practices out-right,
 And where it roots, destroys Religion quite.*

Britain's Remembrancer, p. 56.

Which I could prove by many Instances from the Writings of others, and the known Experiences of our Age; one in my knowledg, when reprov'd for his wicked loose Life, would answer, *God might have made him better.* And in *God's Love to Mankind*, pag. 204. we have it recorded, concerning the Landgrave of *Thuring*, who being reprov'd for his debauched Life, and warned of the dangerous consequence thereof, that so it might move upon him to consider his miserable condition, and return, gave this Answer, "If I
 " am absolutely predestinated to Heaven,
 " the committing of the vilest Crimes will
 " never exclude me: And if I be repro-
 " bated, let me manage my Life never so
 " carefully, let me steer my course never
 " so prudently and piously, I shall never
 " arrive at Heaven and Happiness.

Philet. But our Doctrine is not, as you say, a hinderance to Piety and a godly Life,

Life, for those that hold it are Men of singular Piety, indued with a Spirit of Prayer, and live according to the strictest Rules of Holiness, far beyond any that hold the contrary, who are a company of loose livers.

Philad. I know there are many of your opinion of late flown very high in their own conceit, and condemn others; we are apt on all hands, according to the old Proverb, to *count our own Geese for Swans*; and every Fowl thinks its own Bird the fairest: yet I doubt not, if Persons of the one Judgment and the other were but truly compared together, and an estimation made of the religious worth and holiness of each; those that own General Redemption, need not count it robbery to make themselves every way equal with their Opposers, General Redemption having been not only avouched by our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles, but also owned and asserted for a Truth by Men of singular Learning, piercing Judgments, Gifts, Piety, Zeal for the Truth, and greatest Pillars and Lights of the Christian Church next after the Apostles; it being never scarce brought into question till near St. *Austin's* time, which was about 400 years after Christ. If you look into Mr. *Goodwin*, he sheweth at large the Testimony of those called *Fathers*, for General Redemption. Those *Fathers* be-

fore St. *Austin's* time are *Ireneus*, *Justin Martyr*, *Clemens of Alexandria*, *Cyprian*, *Tertullian*, *Epiphanius*, *Gregory Nazianzen*, *Gregory Nyssen*, *Basil the Great*, *Arnobius*, *Eusebius*, *Cyril of Jerusalem*, *Hilary*, *Athanasius*, *Jerom*, *Ambrose*, *Chrysostom*; these he cites, and proves by words at length out of their Works, that they held General Redemption. Surely the Primitive Christians for between three and four hundred Years after the Apostles, may fully ballance, both for Number and Holiness, all those in the Reformed Churches since *Calvin's* Days.

Philet. I spake of our Days and Time which we live in.

Philad. Well, compare those Lands and Provinces where some hold to the one and the other, and what are those Lands that own the *Genevab* Principles, or the Doctrine taught by Mr. *Calvin*; then those called *Lutherans*: nay, compare the People in the *United Provinces*, those that stuck to the Synod of *Dort*, with those called *Remonstrants*, or *Arminians*, and how will you make it out that those *Predestinarians* that maintain unconditional Election and Reprobation, are men of a more pious heavenly frame of Spirit, making it more truly visible in the integrity of their Lives and Actions, than the other called *Arminians*? what Spirit the *Calvinists* are of, has been
seen

seen these forty Years past, not only in other places, but in *England* also.

Philet. I meddled not with any Foreign Lands.

Philad. Well, if you look home upon *England*, I challenge you to shew me any particular Church or Person this day of your Opinion that is a Phenix, whom none of the Universalists may compare with in Grace and Divine Life ; as far as the Eyes of Man are able to pierce, the latter live as godly, religiously, and soberly in this present World, and act as zealously for God, and are as fruitful in good Works, as any you can produce of your Judgment : but I find 'tis easy for any that fancy themselves the only Saints upon Earth, to despise others. In *Gen.* 38. 24. *Judah* when he heard that *Thamar* was brought in for an Adulteress, presently sentenced her to the fire ; but when the Pledges of his own Folly were brought forth, then he cried out, *she is more righteous than I*. Consider the proud *Pharisee*, tho he was ready to cry to the *Publican*, *Stand off, I am more holy than thou* ; yet the other was more justified. You only bring Accusation without Proof : I shall only say in the words of *Seneca*, “ If it be
“ sufficient to be accused, who can be inno-
“ cent ? for our Lord Jesus, even Innocency
it self, was accused.

Remember, *he that is wise in his own conceit, is but a fool*; and till you shew me in some Particular wherein you exceed all others in Divine Virtue, I shall look upon your Speech to be nothing but the impulse of a giddy Zeal, and desire you to be more considerate, lest you thereby come to condemn the Innocent, and justify the Wicked, which are both *abominable to the Lord*, Pro. 17. 15. so that neither the good nor the bad, the godly nor the ungodly deportment of Persons professing such or such particular Principles, is any proof of the goodness or badness of the Principles, unless their Principle doth naturally tend to either; nay, should the soundness or rottenness of Opinions be esteemed by the goodness or badness of the Lives of many professing them, the Opinion then of Atheism may be as sound as any other Christians, seeing that many Heathens have acquitted themselves upon far better terms of honour and approbation in their Lives, than many Christians.

But come, what if I should yield to what you say, that many that hold this Opinion of yours, are godly Men, and walk in a pious and religious course of Life beyond all others; yet we may say 'tis no thanks to their Opinion that they are so: your Opinion naturally tends to beget sloth, disengageth from the strictest Rules of Piety,

Uprightness,

Uprightness, and Integrity of Life, and countenances Men in carnal liberty, seeing those that are elected can never fall out of his Love and Favour, but he loves them as well while great Sinners, as the most faithful, humble, mortified Christians. May not this incourage any Man to take liberty to commit the most enormous crimes, go on in sin, and cry peace and safety ? and seeing the greatest part of Mankind are shut up in a state of unbelief, without a Christ to believe in, or power to believe, but are left to die and perish, may not such conclude their labour in Religion will be unprofitable, and so will rather sit still than labour at all ?

Moderat. Come neighbour *Martha*, and *Philetus*, I would have you yield to this, that Christ died for all, for the Scripture fully testifieth that he died for all, and every Man ; and we may safely conclude, that the Lamb of God offered up himself a Sacrifice for the Sins of the whole World : for tho Man by his Apostacy fell from God, and by reason of Sin our whole Nature came to be at the utmost moral distance from the Lord, which was, and is, the depth of all Misery, yet did not God wholly leave Man in this state, tho fallen into Misery, but was he capable of recovery ; which was done by Christ's taking our Nature upon him, and laying down his Life for all ; for

he took upon him the Nature of Man, not of Angels; he pitied not the Angels that fell, because their Nature was not to be received by Christ, but he taking upon him the common Nature of Mankind, made it saveable, brought it nearer to Salvation than the lapsed Angels: and what Christ hath done in the Flesh, he must needs have done for all, and the direct and immediate Fruit thereof belongs to all, for he took upon him our Flesh, not the Flesh of the Elect, but of Mankind, &c. so that the Work of Redemption being by his Blood wrought for us thro his Flesh (in which all Mankind have union) it must needs be therefore universal.

Philet. Surely Christ took upon him the Nature of Men, because the Elect Seed was found in that Nature, not in the Nature of Angels: the Apostle saith, *Heb. 2. 14, 15.* that because the Children were partakers of Flesh and Blood, therefore he took part of the same, and herein there is a Union; the Children have a Union with the Flesh of Christ above all others in the World, *Ephes. 5. 30, 31.* And the reason Christ took part of Flesh and Blood, was for the Elect; and none shall, nor can have any saving benefit by it but only such: for to what purpose was it for Christ to be at the expence of his Blood for those, which when he had done all, should have no benefit by it, because not elected? For the

benefit

benefit provided in Redemption, extendeth to none (with respect to Eternal Life) but such as are elected, otherwise these things would follow ;

1. That he must love those in Redemption, that he never loved in Election.

2. That Christ died for all alike, which contradicts these Scriptures, *Rom.* 8. 33. *John* 11. 52. *Ephes.* 5. 23, 25. *Tit.* 2. 14. *John* 10. 15. *Rev.* 14. 14. in which Scriptures who can deny but there are expressions of singular respect and love, for all are not Christ's Elect Children, peculiar People, given Ones, redeemed from amongst Men.

Moderatus. I believe Election is absolute of particular Persons, not the chusing of Believers only to be saved (as *Philadelphus* speaks) but the chusing Persons to believe ; and for those that are these peculiar Ones, Christ died for them in a more peculiar manner, and to such he will give Faith and Repentance to carry them safe through all, that so they shall never perish : yet Christ died for all, and loved all Men in a sense, being *the Saviour of all Men*, 1 *Tim.* 4. 10. Yet did not Christ die for all alike ; some he died for with an intent to adopt for Sons, others he died for to purchase Pardon and Salvation, upon condition of their Repentance, believing and obeying the Lord.

Philet. But have all Men a power to perform these Conditions ?

Moderat. No ; 'tis not from the power of our own Free-will.

Philet. It seems then Christ dying, as well for those that shall perish, as for those that shall be saved ; I see you are for the middle way, you hold absolute Election of some, with universal Redemption of all ; likewise the purchasing a power to believe only for some, and the tenders of Salvation to all, upon condition they believe, repent, and obey the Lord, without a power to believe ; so that many thousands shall, nay must perish, notwithstanding Christ died for them : Will you say that Christ died with an intent to save all ?

Moderat. Tho he died for all, yet not with an intent to save all.

Philad. Pray let me interpose, I perceive there is no great difference between you.

Philet. I must confess I was for the middle way my self, till I found that Universal Redemption would not comport with Particular Election.

Philad. Moderatus, I perceive, can play fast and loose, and deceive us both, being true to neither ; sometime we think we have him fast on our side, and you think him as fast for you, and yet he is as slippery as an Eel to us both, as I could shew, but time will not give me leave to day : But, pray tell me,

me, how you hold Christ died for all, and yet did not intend their Salvation thereby.

Moderat. Then I'll tell you how I hold it.

1. Christ died so far for all, as to purchase for them the Blessings and Benefits of this World.

2. He died so far for all, that there is a potent Argument from thence to perswade all Men to live to him, 2 *Cor.* 8. 15.

3. He died so far for all, that the Gospel should be preached to all.

4. He died so far for all, that all should be raised from the Grave, *Rom.* 14. 9.

Philet. I hold the same.

Philad. So do I: but did Christ die for all in such a manner, and yet never intend their Salvation thereby? this justly seems strange.

Philet. Why, 'tis one thing to die for the Reprobate in some sense, and to die for them with an intention to save them.

Philad. As to the first I suppose you mean, that God is so bountiful a God, that he will not let the least act of Charity, or the least appearance of Good in any go unrewarded in this Life: And that Christ died for the obtaining of these lesser Mercies, but yet had no love for them in order to their Salvation, I have already disproved.

But as to your second, you say that Christ died so far for all, that there is a potent

tent Argument from thence to perswade all Men to live to him ; but then I must prove, beyond all Exceptions, that God Almighty hath designs of Love to all Men, and a desire after their Eternal Well-being, seeing that true Love to God must first spring from the certain knowledg of God's Love to us : And the Holy Ghost teacheth us, *1 John 4. 19.* that love to God must or ought to be kindled in the Hearts of Men, by the sense of this Affection in God to Man: neither (as I said before) can I think that any Man can heartily and cordially love God, unless he believes God had a love for him : And how can any use Arguments to perswade all, or any Man, to love and live to God, whose love to them is doubtful ? Neither doth any Man stand bound, either to use Arguments, or believe them when used, unless he hath a sufficient reason to do so, seeing the Apostle saith, *Rom. 14. 23.* *Whatsoever is not of Faith, is Sin ;* whatsoever a Man doth, not having sufficient reason on which to ground his belief of the lawfulness thereof, is sinful, and an irregular Act, and displeasing to God, *Prov. 19. 2. & 14. 15.* All Arguments are out of doors, neither will wise Men use them to Persons who are necessitated, by an over-ruling Power, to be what they are, seeing you will not say that Christ died with an intent they might be saved.

Philet. I believe Christ's Death was sufficient for all: that is to say, the Death of Christ, simply and in it self considered, was sufficient to redeem and save all Men, yea many Worlds, as well as those who are redeemed and saved by it; and so there is sufficient ground to perswade all Men to love and live to him.

Philad. 'Tis true, the Satisfaction that Christ gave to Divine Justice, was infinite, his Righteousness infinite, and therefore sufficient for the Redemption of this and many Worlds had they been made. In this sense it is sufficient to save the Apostate Angels that fell; but have the fallen Angels any sufficient ground or reason to hope for Salvation, upon the absolute worth and merit of Christ's Satisfaction?

Philet. No; Christ never died to free them from their Chains of Darkeness, and to readmit them into the Love and Favour of God; and as *Moderatus* told us, he took not upon him the Nature of Angels, therefore there is no ground of hopes for them, God never by Christ provided for the Salvation of the fallen Angels, this was besides the Lord's Intention.

Philad. Well, you grant that Christ died sufficiently for all, yet unless you grant that he died intentionally for all (that is, Christ by his Death hath purchased such Grace and Favour in the sight of God for all Men,

Men, that upon their repentance and believing in him, they should be justified, and receive forgiveness of their Sins, and persevering therein, shall be eternally saved) the sufficiency of his Death is no sufficient ground for any Man to believe in him, or to cast himself upon him for Salvation, no more than the fallen Angels.

Now either Christ shed his Blood for all, with an intent to save them (unless they be their own destroyers) or to damn them, or for nothing ; pray tell me which of these three things Christ intended in dying for all ?

Philet. I cannot say to save all.

Philad. For what then ?

Philet. Why truly, I believe, all that Christ did for the Reprobate, was to effect for them the good things of this Life.

Philad. But doth he not give his Grace to all ?

Philet. Yea, common Grace.

Philad. For what use is it given ?

Philet. For no use in respect of Eternal Life ; all that it effects for them, is to make their Condemnation in Hell the greater ; or, as some say, if they use it well, the lighter.

Mar. Others beside the Elect may have the inlightning and conviction of the Spirit ; and God hath wise and holy Ends in it, to restrain some of them from being Persecutors

tors of his Church, and to restrain them from gross Idolatry, and such-like Sins, whereby they are less punished in Hell; but if they abuse these common Graces, it will make their condemnation in Hell the greater.

Philad. Then was Christ's Death rather grievous than gracious; and Christ came not that they might have life more abundantly, but that they might have Hell and Damnation more abundantly. Blush, O ye Heavens, at this! How cruel do you represent the God of Love? For if Christ shed his Blood for all, and yet did not intend Salvation to all, then he must needs shed his Blood not for them, but against them; and so God gave his Son to die for the condemnation of the World, contrary to our Saviour's Expressions, *John* 3. 17. & 12. 47. & 1. 29. So that here can be no potent Argument used to perswade all Men to love and live to him; for he that shall pay for the ease and benefit of another, what was sufficient to have eased me as well as him, and yet shall neglect me in such a Paiment, and leave me in misery, when he might, without the least trouble or charge to himself above what he voluntarily put himself upon for the sake of others, have relieved me, and of miserable made me happy; what reason is there that I should wholly live to him, who wholly

neg-

neglected me in my greatest need, or that he should expect service or thanks for doing nothing? 'Tis a senseless conceit to think Men are engaged in any Bond of thankfulness or service unto Christ, for dying sufficiently for them, unless he died intentionally also.

Philet. What, do you believe Christ shed his Blood intentionally to save all? then if all be not saved, Christ must miss of his Intention, God shall be frustrated of his Design, and Jesus Christ be defeated of that excellent Honour provided by his Father for him: Now if one of those that Christ died with an intent to save should miscarry, why not another, and consequently all, and so by this God's Counsel and Christ's Honour must be laid in the Dust?

Mar. For all you make such a noise about Christ's dying for all *Adam's* Posterity, yet do you really deny that Christ died for any Man or Woman in the World in a true Scripture-sense: for unless Christ died so for Persons, as to make satisfaction for all their Sins, and to purchase saving Grace here, and Glory hereafter, to be infallibly bestowed upon them, all you talk of universal Redemption by Christ, is a universal Nothing.

Philad. It may very well be conceived, that God may intend the Salvation of all Men by Jesus Christ, and yet not all Men
saved;

saved ; nay, should all Men prove so neglective of themselves, as voluntarily to deprive themselves of that great Salvation which Christ out of his great Love hath provided for them, yet it doth not follow from hence, that the Counsel or Design of God should thereby miscarry, nor Christ's Honour be laid in the dust, because of the wilful folly of Men to forsake their own Mercy, and destroy themselves ; see *Isa. 49. 5.* *And now, saith the Lord that formed me from the Womb, &c.* Tho Christ was sent to save, and make *Israel* blessed ; and as the Apostle saith, *Acts 3. ult.* *Hath raised up Jesus, and hath sent him to bless you, and to turn every one of you from your evil ways* (here you see it was God's Mind to gather *Israel*, and to turn them from their Sins) yet all *Israel* was not gathered, nor turned from their Sins ; yet no disparagement to Christ, nor a defeating the Counsel of God.

Indeed if it had been the Design and Intent of God, that the saving Benefits intended to Sinners by the Obedience and Sufferings of Christ, should immediately become theirs upon the bare shedding of his Blood, and that therefore God must needs pardon the Sinner, and bring him in by head and shoulders, that is, by a strong and irresistible hand, save him whether he will or no, or whether they repent of their Sins, believe in him, or continue in impenitency ;

O

nitency ; then indeed if any should miscarry, here would be a defeating of the Counsel and Intention of God : but seeing that as the Grace and Mercy of God in Christ to Sinners is absolutely free ; so is the Lord free to apply the Merits of his Son's Blood to whom, and in what way, and upon what terms he in his Wisdom thinks fit : for we must not conceive that God intended to save Man upon any terms, or without any provision or exception at all, but to put the World into a capacity of Salvation, by removing those grand Obstacles which stood in the way of Mercy, and obstructed its communication to the Offender, and to afford unto the Sons and Daughters of Men means and opportunities to repent and believe, and consequently to be saved : so that whensoever Christ is faithfully and effectually preached to Men, and the Holy Spirit convinces Men of Sin in order to their Salvation, God obtains his end and intent concerning their Salvation, whether they come to be saved or no ; so Christ is said, 1 *John* 2. 2. to be *the Propitiation for the Sins of the whole World* ; it doth not therefore follow, that the Sins of the whole World are so actually and compleatly atoned by him, that they shall never be charged against them ; but that which Christ offered in order to atoning the Sins of the whole World, is so full of Virtue,
and

and withal is so propounded and held forth by the Lord unto the whole World, that if any Man's Sins remain actually unpardoned, 'tis through their voluntary neglect of this Sacrifice, not from any intention on God's part, that their Sins should not be atoned as well as others.—Many more such Testimonies I might add.

Dr. *Holmes* upon *John* 6. 37. pag. 13. saith, " That all the Sins of Mankind are
 " become venial in respect of the Price
 " paid by Christ unto the Father, &c. But
 " all do not obtain actual remission of
 " Sins, because most Offenders do not take
 " out nor plead their Pardon as they
 " ought to do. And, pag. 15. That the
 " Lamb of God offering up himself (clo-
 " thed with humane Nature) a Sacrifice
 " for the Sins of the whole World, in-
 " tended by giving satisfaction sufficient-
 " ly to God's Justice, &c. to prepare a
 " Sovereign Medicine for the Sins of the
 " whole World, which should be denied
 " to none that were minded to take the
 " Benefit thereof; howsoever he intend-
 " ed not, by applying this Alsufficient Sa-
 " crifice to every one in particular, to
 " make it effectual unto the Salvation of
 " all, or to procure thereby at the hands
 " of his Father actual Pardon for the Sins
 " of the whole World: he applys this on-
 " ly effectually to them, who make claim

“ to the Satisfaction by promise, suing
 “ for the Spirit, and Faith, upon other
 “ Promises, in Prayer waiting for a gra-
 “ cious answer till they have it, &c. So
 “ in respect of his Merit he may be ac-
 “ counted a kind of universal Cause of
 “ restoring our Nature, as *Adam* was of
 “ the depraving of it. Much of the same
 nature, and almost word for word, is that
 of Bishop *Usher*, quoted by Mr. *Granham*
 in his *Dialogue*, pag. 22. And saith *Hockin*,
 on God’s Decree, pag. 45, 46. We need not
 refer the deplorable misery of the Sons of
Adam to the Divine Will, as Mr. *Calvin* is
 pleased to do, *Instit. lib. 18. cap. 1.* but the
 horrid perverseness of our own Wills: for
 the highest Act of Divine Intention is to
 save Men, if they do not by the wicked-
 ness of their own perverse Will frustrate
 the same, by refusing the gracious Offers
 of Salvation by Christ, and not observing
 the real Conditions upon which the Propo-
 sals of Mercy are made; for the Lord
 doth solemnly prove that he is not willing
 that any should perish, *2 Pet. 3. 9.* There-
 fore we cannot lay the blame upon God in
 any thing, but wholly upon Man, who
 doth voluntarily bring Death and Misery
 upon himself. Nay, *Calvin* himself upon
John 3. 16. saith, “ That Faith in Christ
 “ is of a saving Nature to all, and that
 “ Christ brought Life, because his Hea-
 “ venly

“venly Father would not have Mankind
 “to perish which he loved, &c. For tho
 “there will be nothing in the World found
 “worthy of the Favour of God, yet he
 “sheweth himself favourable unto the
 “whole World, in that he calls all Men
 “without exception to believe in Christ.
 Here you may see that in the Eyes of these
 God may intend the Salvation of all Men
 by Jesus Christ, and yet all Men may not
 be saved, without any prejudice in the
 least, either to the Grace and Goodness of
 God, or to his power of working in this
 behalf.

Mar. But, Philadelphus, pray consider (with
 respect to Christ's dying for all) that when
 our Saviour died as a Mediator, it was near
 2000 Years from the Creation, and there
 were multitudes then in the Prison of Hell,
 from whence there is no redemption; and
 do you think that Christ died upon the
 Cross, and bore such unutterable Dolours
 for them, to redeem them that were there?
 There was need indeed that Christ should
 die for those Saints that were in Heaven be-
 fore he died, because they were saved upon
 the account of his having undertaken as a
 Surety for them to make Satisfaction to
 the Justice of God for their Sins; but sure-
 ly it will sound very harshly in the Ears of
 all Christians, that Christ should sweat
 drops of Blood, and bear the Curse of the

Law for them who were then in Hell when he died, 1 *Pet.* 3. 18, 19, 20.

Philad. The 1 *Pet.* 3. 18, 19, 20. is of doubtful interpretation ; and by your own grant, the doubtful ought to be expounded and tried by the Light and Testimony of such as are more clear and evident. Now in this Text the Apostle sheweth the great patience of God toward that wicked Generation ; and that he strove with them by his Spirit, and gave unto them a Preacher of Righteousness, and a hundred years space to repent in ; and doubtless the patience of God towards them was for this end, to allure and draw them to Repentance.

But it seems you would not have any believe that Christ died for any of those that before his coming in the Flesh had withstood the Day of Grace, and sinned beyond the reach of Mercy : But there was need for him to die for those that were in Heaven before he died, because they were saved upon the account of his dying for them. Now I might shew you from your own sense of Election being from Eternity, without any consideration of Faith in Christ, how you abrogate the Grace of God in Christ, and make his Death to be in vain, seeing that God loved them every whit as well, and intended to do as much for them before Christ died for them, or

*

before

before their ingrafting into Christ by Faith, yea, before the Blood of the Covenant was sprinkled upon them, as after; and therefore there was no reason that Christ should shed his Blood to procure those things for the Elect, which were truly and properly theirs before, in and by God's purpose in electing of them, yea, and that without any consideration of Christ's dying for them, or their believing in him.

Philet. Nay hold, we do not say that God intends actually to confer Remission of Sins or Eternal Life upon the Elect, otherwise than through the Satisfaction made by Christ for them in his Death; and tho God might intend and purpose Salvation to the Elect, without the consideration of the Death of Christ, yet in the execution of this his purpose, the Death of Christ is all in all; and you ought to distinguish between God's Decrees and the execution of them.

Philad. If it was consistent with the Wisdom and Justice of God to decree forgiveness of Sins and Salvation unto Men, without consideration of the Death of Christ, or their believing in him, he may as well confer these things upon them without any such consideration; and then to what purpose should Christ die?

But, *Philetus*, were those that were in Heaven before Christ's coming saved, with-



without Faith in him that was to come?

Philet. No; all that were saved before Christ's coming, were saved by believing and imbracing him that was to come, and to be a Sacrifice for their Sins; in the belief of which they offered Sacrifices, and through which they looked at Jesus who was to come.

Philad. Then it is sufficient to tell you that the want of that Faith in the Christ to come, and obedience to his Will, was the cause of their destruction.

Besides, consider, Christ was *the Lamb slain* (virtually in the Decree or Purpose of God) *from the Foundation of the World*; and it was on the account of Christ's taking humane Nature upon him, that Man was preserved in the World from returning to the Dust from whence he was taken: for all Men live, and move, and have a being here, by virtue of the Lord Jesus, the Seed of the Woman; and Believers did before Christ's coming in the Flesh, partake of the real Virtue of his Death as if he had been already slain. So also Christ came *into the World, not to condemn the World, but that the World through him might be saved*, John 3. 17. and came to seek and to save that which was lost, to shed his Blood, to bear unutterable do-lours, not only for them that were saved, but for those also who through their unbelief and impenitency were not saved; their

their unbelieving and rejecting of Gospel-Grace rendred them obnoxious to just punishment: for saith the same Apostle, *the Gospel was preached to them that were dead,* 1 Pet. 4. 6. tho they had not the Letter of the Gospel preached to them (as with us at this day) yet they had the spiritual Substance and Effect of the Gospel preached to them; and therefore 'tis said, that Christ went by his Spirit and preached to them, and their unbelief and rejection was a Sin against the Covenant of Grace: for those before Christ, and those since Christ came, are for the main under one and the same Covenant, yea essentially and for substance the same, the same Christ exhibited thro Types and Shadows, which we have revealed in the Gospel with open face; and the same substantial Duties, as Repentance, Faith and Obedience, with the same spiritual Blessings, as pardon of Sin, Justification and Eternal Life. So that all Persons being under one Covenant of Grace made with all Mankind in the Promised Seed; and this Covenant the same for Substance both before and since Christ's coming; and all Persons that were saved before Christ, being saved by a Covenant of Grace, and through believing on him that was to come, it necessarily follows that the want of Faith and Obedience to the Lord Jesus, according to their measure of knowing him, and believing

lieving on him, was the cause of their condemnation; see *Heb.* 4. 2. compared with *Chap.* 3. 18, 19. So that I cannot see how it should sound more harshly in the Ears of all Christians, that Christ should sweat drops of Blood, and bear the Curse of the Law for those that were in Hell (if you will have it so) when he died, than that he should sweat drops of Blood, &c. for those that after his coming in the Flesh shall go to Hell, notwithstanding all that Christ hath done for them: so that Christ did really intend the Good and Benefit of those that perished through unbelief, before his coming in the Flesh, as well as after; if not so, I know not how any could use potent Arguments to perswade them to love and live to him.

Moderat. Come *Philadelphus*, the thing to be proved is this; whether Christ died equally for all and every Man? this I suppose you will not easily grant, for if Christ died equally for every Man, they would have equally the means of Salvation granted to them.

Philad. This is but a lame proof that Christ died not for all Men equally, &c. as if difference of Means vouchsafed to Men, should argue different Intentions in God touching their Salvation. You may as well prove by this Rule that Christ died not equally for the Elect themselves, as the other; they do not equally alike enjoy the Means

Means of Grace : nay by this a Man, but meanly read in the Scriptures, may prove, that God bore more good-will to many that perish, than towards many of the Elect ; for many perish under more excellent and greater means of Salvation, than are vouchsafed to many that are saved, *stretching out his hands all the day long to a disobedient People, Isa. 65. 2. Mat. 15. 28. & 11. 20, 21. & 8. 10. 1 Pet. 3. 20. And in Mat. 22. 3.* our Saviour by that Parable holds forth to us these two things.

1. That the Death of Christ signified by the Oxen and Fatlings slain, was provided by the King for those that never came to partake of the Feast, but were rejected because they made light of the Invitation, and went away, one to his Farm, &c. yet Jesus Christ, with the Blessing accruing thereby to Mankind, was equally intended for those that perish through their unworthiness, as well as for those that are saved ; for they did neglect so great a blessing, and when there was a prize put in their Hands, they had no heart to use it, *Pro. 17. 16.* yet notwithstanding the neglect on their part, God was not wanting one his part to provide good things for them. The

2d Thing observable is this, the King's Servants took more pains with those that never came to partake of the Supper, than with

with those that came ; for those that rejected the Invitation, were again and again called, whenas the other came at the first.

Philet. but if the Feast had been provided for all, and God had called them in good earnest, they would have come, or been compelled to it, as those were that tasted of it.

Philad. If the King had intended that those who were invited should never have tasted of his Supper, questionless he would never have invited them ; for it's but mockage to use Arguments to perswade Persons to accept of a Feast, that was only and wholly provided for another, with an intent to exclude those that were invited. Thus do you make the God of Truth a meer Deluder of poor miserable Mankind, to cause his Ministers to proclaim throughout the World the glad tidings of Grace and Salvation prepared for all Flesh, and by the Gospel open the Bosom of his Love to all poor Sinners, and by sweet, loving, and gracious words, offer to them forgiveness of Sins, Life and Salvation, and yet never intend to bestow it upon them : what is this but to represent God as hollow-hearted ?

But it is clear that in the ministry of the Word, God doth as well perswade the obstinate, and many of those that never believe, as he doth those that do ; as it is said,

said, 2 Chron. 36. 15, 16. That the Lord God of their Fathers sent to them by his Messengers, rising up berimes, and sending, because he had compassion on his People, &c. But they mocked the Messengers, despised his Word, and misused his Prophets, till the Wrath of the Lord rose up against them. And thus doth the Lord in this Gospel-day, being every way as serious in his pressing the Gospel upon those that remain obdurate to the last, as upon those that in time come to believe; as Paul preached the same Gospel (at Athens) to those that mocked, as to those that clave to him and believed, Acts 17. 32, 34. so that difference of Means doth not argue different Intention in God touching their Salvation.

Yet it is not denied but that God doth in his providential Dispensations, put a difference between one man's spiritual Opportunities and another's; all do not enjoy equal Conveniencies and Opportunities, nor have Ministers the same efficacy and power for conversion and edification, &c. Nor are Men equally free from, or subject to temptations and occasions of Sin, with many such. I do not say Christ died for all, so that all should enjoy all these equally alike; but that God did really, truly, and cordially intend the Salvation of one Man as well as another, considered as Men, in and by Christ's Death. What tho there be
great

great disparity of Means, and of Grace also (according to the Divine Will) yet sufficient Grace is afforded to all, both to those that do not actually believe, nor are really converted, as well as those that are. *Ezek.* 18. *Pro.* 1. 24. *Mat.* 23. 37. *Luke* 8. 12. for whomsoever God calleth to Faith and Salvation, he doth it sincerely and with unfeigned Intentions of saving them ; *John* 5. 34. and 10. 20. *Tit.* 2. 11, 12. 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. 2 *Cor.* 5. 20. and 6. 1. From all I conclude that Christ in dying for Man intended nothing but that which was real and saving in the proper nature and tendency of it.

But as to your third, *Moderatus*, you say Christ died for all Men so far that the Gospel might be preached unto all : Now if you mean that in the Gospel terms of Reconciliation are offered to all poor Sinners, and that the Word preached is by the Lord appointed an instrumental means to make Men new Creatures, and that the Lord by sending the Gospel, and his Ministers upon the Gospel errand, doth not thereby intend the Obduration and Destruction of any, but the Conversion and Salvation of all ; if this be your meaning, I and you are no more two but one ; and I will say in the words of *Abraham* to *Lot*, *Let there be no strife between thee and me, for we are brethren.* But if with *Calvin* in his *Institut.* Lib.

3. Chap. 24. you say "that God fendeth his
 " Word to Reprobates that they may be
 " made more deaf, he setteth a Light to
 " some Men that they may be so much the
 " more blind, and offers them Instruction
 " that they may be the more ignorant, and
 " he useth a Remedy but to the end they
 " may not be healed. Or what *Maccon* in
 his *disputation* 14. Page 11, 12. " That
 " Christ knocketh at the heart of Repro-
 " bates, who he knoweth neither can nor
 " will open unto him ; not that he may en-
 " ter in, but that he might upbraid them
 " for their Impotency, and increase their
 " Damnation, &c. therefore did God speak
 " to them by his Son, that by the contempt
 " and hatred of his Son they might procure
 " the greater damnation. If this be your
 Opinion, produce some word to evince
 such a Decree, and I'll cease contending
 with you.

Philet. Do not the Scriptures say, *Mat.*
 13. 13, 14. and *John* 12. 39, 40. in both
 places you have it expresly said, that *they*
could not believe, because that Esaias said, he
hath blinded their Eyes, &c. and *Deut.* 29. 4.
 And doth not *Simeon* say of Christ, *Luke* 2.
 34. that he was set for the rising and falling
 of many in *Israel*? *2 Cor.* 2. 16. Christ is
 there said to be the *savour of Death to some,*
as well as of Life to others : And our Saviour
 in *John* 9. 39. expresly saith, That for
 Judg-

Judgment am I come into the World, that they that see not, might see; and those that see, might be made blind. Do not these Scriptures shew, that tho the Gospel is preached to all, yet for the blinding the Eyes, and hardning the Hearts of those that believe not?

Philad. Do not we look upon the Gospel the greatest Blessing, next to Christ, that we can enjoy or receive? But if the choicest Blessings are intended as Snares to intrap our Souls, we have little cause to be thankful to God for them. These Scriptures speak not of the primary and direct Intention of God in sending Christ into the World, but of the Event, and that which many times is effected by it through Mens voluntary Rebellion: Christ was not sent into the World with any intent on God's part, nor came with any intention of his own, to make those that see to become blind, but with an intent to heal the blindness of all to their Peace and Glory; so that if any be blind, ignorant, and foolish, 'tis merely accidental: and tho the glorious Light of the Gospel should equally shine on all Men, as the natural Sun doth diffuse his Beams to all Places, yet it hath not an equal effect on all alike; for the same Beams that cause the Flowers to smell, make the Dung-hills stink; yet this is but accidentally, as it finds matter to work on, no fault being in
the

the Sun : so in *Mat.* 13. we read of several effects the Word hath, not from any defect in the Seed sown, the Seed being one and the same, but from the badness or goodness of the Soil; it shews that some hearers of the Gospel would hear so, that their hearing would turn to a blessed account, others would hear without reaping any Soul benefit thereby.

So that these Scriptures speak not any thing of God's intention of sending Christ, and so the Gospel into the World, but they shew how unworthily some Men will behave themselves towards Christ, and the tenders of Salvation by the Gospel, and what will be the end and effects the Gospel will have upon those that despise and reject it; for it is with the Gospel preached, and the Gifts of Nature and Grace also, as it is with the good things of this Life, which are by the Lord given to the Children of Men, that so his bountifulness and goodness might lead them to repentance : but if their Table be a Snare, and their Prosperity their Ruin, 'tis through their own perverseness and horrid impieties : so if the Gospel hardens or blinds any, 'tis through the ill temper of Mens Hearts, and their desperate obstinacy to refuse such means of Salvation, and the severity of God who giveth up obstinate Men to their own hearts lust, and in his just Judgment permits them to dash against Christ, and other

means of Salvation. What saith the Apostle, 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. *If our Gospel be hid, 'tis hid to them that are lost, whom the God of the World hath blinded their Eyes*, that are alienated from the Life of God through the ignorance that is in them; and so give up themselves to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness, and despise the Light of the Gospel, cavil and quarrel at it: no wonder then that God withdraws his Spirit from striving with them, and gives them up to their own hearts lust: and if ever the Lord restrains the heavenly Influences of his Spirit, and withdraws his Blessing that usually accompanies the faithful and sincere preaching of the Gospel, a stupid blindness must needs follow; so tho there be Preaching and Prayer and other Ordinances, yet when the presence of God is not with them, there is no Milk in the Breast, and to such 'tis all one as if there was none: nay as some the Gospel enlightens, these it smites with blindness; as it softens some, so it hardens these, as *Isa. 6. 10. Acts 28. 26. make the Hearts of this People fat, and make their Ears heavy*; as if the Lord should have said, Go and preach to this People, but preach them into hardness and blindness; because they refused to hear or see, let therefore the Light make them blind; and the Gospel, which is the joyful sound of Peace and Joy, make them deaf

deaf and stop their Ears ; perswade no longer, but make their Hearts fat, their Ears heavy, and shut their Eyes, that they may walk in their own counsel, and fill up the measure of their Iniquity. Wo to those that God answers thus, to leave them to their own Hearts lust ; and say as once to *Ephraim, Hosea 4. Let him alone.* If God deal thus with any, they indeed shall never melt at any Sermon, so as to awaken them out of their Sins ; they will prove but deaf Adders that stop their Ears against all Gospel-Charmers, tho never so wise.

But this God never did, nor never will do, but as the Fruit and Effect of provoking Sin and Disobedience ; for which see *Psal. 81. 11. But my People would not hearken to my Voice ; and Israel would have none of me ; so I gave them up, &c. Acts 7. 42. Rom. 1. 24, 26. Hosea 4. 17.* So that the ground of God's shutting their Eyes, and hardning their Hearts, was but the effect of their first shutting their own Eyes and Ears, *Acts 28. 27. Pro. 29. 1.* When Men obstinately reject the Proposals of Mercy in the Gospel of Peace, from such God may justly withdraw his illuminating Grace, and wholly leave them in the dark and to themselves, to follow their unbridled natures.

Duveil upon this place, *Acts 28. 27.* quotes the words of *Mollerus & Clemens*, who explaining the words of Christ, that *seeing they*

they should not see, and hearing they should not hear, Mat. 13. tell us “ That it is not lawful
 “ to think that ignorance was wrought in
 “ them by the Lord, but it was a propheti-
 “ cal Discourse of that which was to be ;
 “ and signified that they would not heed
 “ those things that were spoken : for nei-
 “ ther do the Prophets blind any People,
 “ nor doth God, when he causeth blindness
 “ in them, do this efficaciously ; but seeing
 “ he daily sheweth them his Will, and
 “ moreover did many and those stupen-
 “ dous Miracles, yet they despised and made
 “ a mock of them all. God was provoked
 “ with their stubbornness, so that he with-
 “ drew himself from them, and so suffered
 “ them to wander and perish blindfolded in
 “ their darkness, and that by his just Judg-
 “ ment.

Philer. Is it not said, *Deut.* 29. 4. That
*the Lord had not given them a Heart to per-
 ceive, and Eyes to see, and Ears to hear, to
 this day?*

Philad. 'Tis said so, they once had seen
 the Wonders that the Lord did for them in
 the Land of *Egypt* unto *Pharaoh*, &c. as
vers. 3, 4. yet *the Lord hath not given thee
 a Heart to perceive, and Eyes to see, &c.*
 They once knew, and did see and under-
 stand that it was the Lord that wrought
 deliverance for them in *Egypt*, and at the
Red-Sea ; and they sang his Praise, but soon
 forgot

forgot his Works, Psal. 106. 12. yea, rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit; and so the Lord took away the Light he once gave, and did not continue it to that day, which *Moses* spoke to them: and indeed thus hath God dealt with others, and will deal with us if we neglect to follow the Light he affords to us, even leave us in the dark: So the Lord has done to many to whom he once gave a Heart to perceive, and Eyes to see, and yet he hath not given them to this day. The *Jews* and *Jerusalemites* had the things belonging to their Peace revealed to them; but now, saith Christ, *they are hid from your Eyes*: 'tis just with God many times to turn the wisdom of the Wise to foolishness.

Philet. But what say you to 1 Pet. 2. 8. *They stumbled at the Word, being disobedient, whereunto they were appointed?* And so Isa. 8. 14, 15. which is a Prophecy of Christ, that he shall be for a Sanctuary to the Elect, but for a stone of stumbling, and for a Rock of Offence, &c. And so Luke 2. 34. Mat. 13. 10, 11. Luke 8. 10.

Philad. Why what should I say to it? shall I say that God laid Christ in the way, and sent his Word and Gospel into the World, with an intent that most Persons should stumble at this Stone and be broken to pieces, or that Christ died so far for all Men, that the Word might be preached to the

whole World, that so the greatest part might stumble, disobey, and reject Christ and the Gospel? Should I say so, it would be a great impeachment of God's Justice and Holiness, and would make him the Author of Sin and Disobedience, so contrary to his Nature.

And I once again desire you not to think that the bare naming a Text, or Texts of Scripture, enough to confirm an Opinion, but that you seriously mind the Context, with the sense and drift of the Holy Ghost in the Text, and explain Scripture by Scripture; otherwise we may run our selves into a thousand Misunderstandings, contrary to the Analogy or Rule of Faith. Now if we compare this Text with what you have in *Acts* 13. 47. *Isa.* 49. 6. *Tit.* 2. 11. with many other places, you will find that neither Christ, nor the Gospel, is sent into the World intentionally for any to stumble and disobey it, but Christ is to be preached and held forth by Gospel-Ministers for the Salvation of all in the whole World that believe in him; as *Tit.* 2. 11. *For the Grace of God that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared unto all Men, &c.* or as our old Translation renders it, *For that Grace of God which bringeth Salvation unto all Men, hath appeared.* Here you may see that this Grace in the offers of it, and in the Intention of God, is of a saving tendency and

importance to all Men, and the savingness of it, and Salvation by it, is tendered alike to all Men : So that Christ came not into the World to be a Rock of Offence, at which the greatest part of Men should stumble and fall, but to shed his Blood for all Men ; not only for those that are saved, but also for those which through unbelief and impenitency are not saved, *John 3. 17.*

Besides, your Texts, if read in that Spirit in which they were wrote, shew you, that they were appointed or put to the Word, and they stumbled at that, and were disobedient to that ; they stumbled at Christ and the Word out of stubbornness and wilfulness, not for want of Light. Mr. *Loveday* in his Exposition on *Rom. 9.* pag. 33. saith, " That Dr. *Hammond* reads the words, " That those that are disobedient to the " Gospel, and stand obstinately against " Christ, are those who are by God appointed and declared so to stumble, as " to be ruined by their obstinacy. So that disobedience to the Gospel is not to be imputed to the God of Heaven, but the God of this World, 2 *Cor. 4.* Neither must we think that Men stumbling at Christ, and being disobedient to the Word, to which they were appointed to learn their Duty, is the Result of fatal Necessity. But prethee, *Philetus*, tell me whether you be of *Moderatus's* mind, that Christ died

so far for all, that the Gospel, which is glad tidings, should be preached to all; and whether the Lord by the preaching of the Gospel doth not call all Men to Faith and Repentance, promising Salvation to all that do believe?

Philet. I know Faith and Repentance are required of all, and God by the Gospel invites all Men to believe in him, promising Salvation to all that do so believe; yet only those will believe for whom Christ died to purchase these things for them, and to purchase their Salvation; *Ye believe not, because you are not of my Sheep,* John 10. 26.

Philad. That is, I suppose, you mean because they were not elected, and because Christ did not die for them to purchase a Power to believe; and therefore they could not believe, because God had decreed their unbelief: this is plainly to charge all the unbelief of Men upon the Lord; but saith Christ, *They believe not, because they were not of his Sheep:* And who those are he tells you in the next verse, They are such as hearing his Voice, follow him. Such fallacious reasoning strikes at the Root of the Gospel of Grace and free Love of God, and frees the Devil and wicked Men from bringing destruction on themselves; for by such Doctrine God Almighty is the sole cause of all the incredulity in the World, and tho he offers and invites all Men to par-
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take of Grace, yet he doth it not really and in good earnest: and while your Ministers call upon Persons to believe, and seem to wonder that they do not believe, and yet hold that God hath decreed they shall never believe, their Sermons are mere dissimulations and nonsense. What would they bind Men to believe that which is untrue, and charge them to take and receive Christ as tendred to them in the Gospel, and to believe there is remission of Sins in Christ's Blood for them, when he never shed it for them, and so to lay hold upon that which they had no kind of interest in? This not only makes your Ministers false Witnesses, to offer Salvation to those whose Damnation is absolutely determined, but also makes God a mere deluder of miserable Man, whom he calleth by the preaching of the Gospel to partake of Salvation by his Son, and yet fully before intended their ruin. Is not this as much as in you lyeth, to make God a liar? as 1 *Job*. 5. 10. for they that believe not God, make him a liar, because they believe not the Record God gave of his Son; and what is that, namely, That *whosoever believe on him should not perish, but have Everlasting Life*: not that any Man can possibly make God a Liar; no, let God be True, and all Men Liers; but Men by their not believing on Christ do represent God as untrue in his Word, because they reject
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that as a Fable which hath been spoken by the Lord himself for a Truth ; and those that preach the glad-tidings of Grace and Peace to all Men, and every Creature, sin in preaching, in that they preach Lies to most Men, yea and require Men to believe Lies. May we not easily see that all your Exhortations, Chidings, your whining, and seemingly bemoaning the state of poor Sinners, is but a dissembling Art?

Mar. O what pangs are faithful Ministers in, lest poor Souls should perish !

Philad. Yea, true Gospel-Ministers may ; but what Pangs your Ministers are in that hold Reprobation without respect to actual Sins part of their Creed, I know not ; is commiseration in you a Virtue, and is not all Good originally in God ; and can I take your Ministers to be filled with more compassion than the God of Love, or to be better than they represent God to be ? For do they not hold, that notwithstanding all the passionate wishes of the Lord, his Exhortations and Perswasions, Reprovings, Expostulations, mourning over the perishing state of poor Sinners ; yea, tho he useth Promises to allure them, and Threatnings to deter them, and calls all Men by the Gospel to believe on his Son, that they may live through him, and swears that he wills not their Death : yet hath he by an eternal and uncontrolable Decree shut up
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the greatest part of those to whom these Tenders are made, under Sin and Misery, that they shall never repent and be saved? Christ never died intentionally nor really to save them; they have thereby no more interest in him, than the fallen Angels, and therefore there is no more reason why the Gospel should be preached to the one more than the other; whereby it must needs follow that many Men by the Gospel are bound in Conscience to believe that which is untrue, and by your Ministers pressed and charged to receive that which they have nothing to do with: by this you make the Lord guilty of the deepest dissimulation in his Promises and tenders of Grace to all. And, pray, what are your Ministers but false Witnesses, if they promise Salvation for all Men, when they believe there is no Salvation for far the greatest part of Men, whom Christ never purchased by his Blood? If they exhort Sinners to turn from their Sins to the Lord, and promise them, that if they do so, they shall live, and tell all Men that God would not have one of them die in their Sins, but rather turn and live, is not this according to your Notion Lying? And do not they promise and undertake more in the behalf of God, than God himself is willing to perform? What a bustle do your Ministers keep, and to what purpose, unless to get Money,

Money, seeing the most powerful Ministers and Sermons cannot in the least alter the Intention of the Lord about the Salvation or Damnation of one Soul, Man's final and eternal State being fixed in Heaven ?

And thus do you give the Truth of God the lie, and highly impeach the glorious Gospel, and make your Ministers teach nothing but absurdities ; nay, more than this, it overthrows not only his Goodness and Mercy, but also his Justice, that Men before they partake of the Breath of Life, or are any ways guilty of actual Sins, should be so rigidly condemned to perpetual Misery, yea appointed to receive the Wages of Sin before they committed any ; this is inconsistent with common Justice and Equity amongst Men : and *Shall not the Judge of all the World do right ?* said good *Abraham* to God, *Gen.* 18. 25. And, saith *Job*, *shall mortal Man be more just than God ?* and so our Apostle, *Is there unrighteousness with God ? how then shall God judge the World ?* Doth it not wrong the pure Justice of God, to hold that he will judge and condemn Men for ever to lie under his Wrath for doing that which he himself decreed them to do, or that God Almighty should behold Mankind in the Fall, and so totally desert them without affording them a Saviour to believe in, or any power to believe, whereby they must unavoidably perish ; and yet at the same

same time command all Men, without exception, to believe in his Son; *Acts* 17. 30. *1 Joh.* 3. 23. *Mat.* 16. 5. *Rom.* 10. 16, 17. and severely threaten all those that shall not believe on him, *Mark* 16. 16. *John* 8. 24. *John* 3. 36. *John* 16. 9.

And Jesus Christ not only commands all Men to repent and believe on him, and threatens all with Death that refuse to believe, but also hath promised Life and Salvation to all without exception, which shall believe; *John* 3. 16. & 11. 25, 26. *1 Pet.* 2. 6. And also by many sweet encouraging ways, labours to induce them to believe. Sometimes he presents them with his great Love, *John* 3. 16. *Tit.* 3. 4. sometimes with his Mercy and tender Compassion, *Exodus* 34. 6. *Luke* 1. 72. sometimes with his delight in shewing Mercy, *Micha* 7. 18. *Ezek.* 33. 11. and with his desire after their Salvation, *1 Tim.* 2. 4. At other times with the great trouble of his Soul at their stubborn courses, and that because if they persisted in them, it would bring destruction to them, *Ezek.* 18. 31. *Jer.* 44. 4. likewise shewing what Glory would accrue to them, *Ephes.* 1. 6, 12. Now to think, or say, that under all these Expressions of Love and Desire to save Mankind, he hath past and sealed a firm Decree in his Eternal Counsel to the contrary, is a great dishonour done to God, making

making him guilty of horrid and notorious Hypocrisy, to destroy his Creatures under the specious pretence of Justice and shew-

* *The Lord Ruffel's Speech.* ing Mercy; and as a great * Statesman once said, *To kill*

by Forms and Subtilties of Law, is the worst sort of Murders. And to destroy Millions of Persons under a colour of Mercy and Good-will, is like a Cat playing with a Mouse, and making sport with other Mens miserys, and one of the greatest Cruelties in the World; which Doctrine I am sure is altogether inconsistent with his incomprehensible Justice.

Mar. I deny that which I hold clasheth against, or oppugneth the Justice of God; 'tis true, it sheweth there is much of Sovereignty in God, but nothing of Injustice; he doth but leave the Dog in his Vomit, the Viper to his own Poison: and as *Philetus* said before, God was not bound to bring forth a Saviour for any of fallen Mankind; nor is he obliged to give restituent Grace to fallen Man: so that this Preterition is not a subtraction of any inherent Grace, but a suspension of Assistance, for God may do what he will with his own, and there can be no injustice in it. May not God, who is the Supreme Lord of all, deny a free Benefit, without wrong to his Justice? Besides, God is not bound to restore to Man a Power to believe, because he once had

had it, and lost it through his own fault."

Philad. Most of this I have answered already, and so shall say the less to it now : I believe that the God of Heaven is not absolutely bound to any Man, but hath free liberty to dispense his Favour where and to whom he will ; yet hath he engaged himself for our assistance (if we be not wanting to our selves) to let in such spiritual strength as to inable us to perform that Duty that is required of us : the Lord always giveth strength where he giveth a Command, or else the neglect of it will not be their condemnation ; if it was not so, he would be, as the evil Servant stiled him, *a hard Master, reaping where he hath not sowed*, &c. or like *Pharaoh* whom God punished as a Tyrant, to deny Straw, and yet require the tale of Brick ; to require obedience to his Divine Will, and yet deny supernatural Grace, without which it was impossible for them to keep it. But if your Doctrine be true, Persons are required to believe, and are condemned for not believing, and yet God hath shut them under unbelief, they have no power to believe, and God hath decreed they shall never have a power to believe whilst they live ; nay, he not only denys a Power to believe, but a Christ to believe in : the greatest part of Men have no more part in Christ, and the Covenant of Grace, than
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the Devils have ; and yet the Gospel is to be preached to all for the obedience of Faith. Is not this a piece of the highest Blasphemy, making the great Creator as vile and treacherous as a Creature ; yea, to make the Almighty subject to the most servile Art of Flattery, pretending one thing when the contrary is really intended ? as if the Lord designed to sport himself with the ruin and destruction of miserable Man. This would be the visible effects of injustice and guile in God ; and it would be merely folly in Man to walk in any Christian Practice.

Philet. I would not have you, *Philetus*, wade too deep into God's Secrets : there are different Intentions in God in affording the Gospel, which we know not of ; and we may say, *O the height, and depth, both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God, &c.* No Creature knows the ground and reason why God in his Wisdom doth so order the Affairs of the World as he doth ; nor why the Gospel is sent to one more than to another, especially the Word of his Grace to Salvation ; this only comes by Divine Counsel, *Acts 13. 26. To you is the Word of this Salvation sent.*

Philad. Truly, *Philetus*, you are one of those that stand in need of the same Caution as you give me, for if you did not carry it at too great a height of confidence,

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you would not take liberty to speak of God's Decrees, and of the Transactions of Heaven, as if you fully knew the Lord's Secrets: or how dare you speak of such Decrees to be in God, which he hath no where revealed in his Word, nay which are contrary to it? and so set the Secret Will, and Revealed Will of God, to wage War one with the other, and set the Decrees of God, and his Commands, at open defiance.

I do acknowledg, that the way which God takes about the Government of the World, and in his Wisdom, &c. as *Rom. 11. 33.* is an unfathomable depth, and is so unconceivable and incomprehensible, that it is above all comprehension of Men and Angels: I also grant that it may be consistent, both with the Wisdom and Mercy of God, to vouchsafe a greater means of Grace, Light, and Knowledg, and of Salvation, to some more than to others.

Philet. How can Persons be saved without Faith? for *whatsoever is not of Faith, is Sin*: and how shall they believe of him of whom they have not heard? and how can any preach the Gospel as they ought, except they be sent? Some the Word of Salvation is sent to, and not to others; you know the Apostle was forbid to preach the Word in *Asia*, *Acts 15. 6.* and when they

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assayed to go into Bithynia, the Spirit suffered them not, ver. 7.

Philad. For what reason God would not that the Gospel should at that time be preached by *Paul* and *Timothy* in *Asia*, is hid from us; he might have many, either that he would make use of their Ministry somewhere else, or that he had appointed some others to the Work; whatsoever it was, certainly the Reason is not to be brought from God's absolute Decree of Reprobation, as *Calvin* upon this place doth: for it is certain that the Gospel was at least soon after preached, and that in this place by *Paul* himself; so that *Deme-trius* the Siver-smith did greatly lament the admirable progress of the Gospel in *Asia*, Acts 19. 26. And in the 10th Verse you may see that *Paul* continued for the space of two years at *Ephesus*, which was the Metropolis of *Asia*, insomuch that it was said, That all they that dwell in *Asia* heard the Word of the Lord *Jesus*, both *Jews* and *Greeks*.

Mar. But all Men have not the Gospel preached to them, nor the same Light and Means to know the Lord, and so come to believe in him: and surely if Christ died for all Men, for the whole World, he would have sent amongst them the Word of Life, and removed out of the way all those things which he knew would have hinder-
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ed their Salvation ; and therefore I cannot think but all those Nations which the Gospel is not sent to, are left by the Lord in the Fall, and reserved for Eternal Punishment.

Philad. As it was in *Paul's* time, so it is now : the *Jews* prided themselves against the *Gentiles*, as being the only Elect People, and the *Gentiles* but Reprobates and Castaways ; and so do such as you are at this day, by the Nations which have not the Gospel-light (as I have often heard to my great grief) even damn them by wholesale, looking upon them little better than Devils. What tho the Lord, according to his manifold Wisdom, is pleased to vouchsafe a greater sufficiency of means to know the Lord, and to know what God hath done for them, and by the Gospel reveals those things, which otherwise in an ordinary way could not be known to one Nation, or one Age and Generation of Men more than another ; yet knowing, and by daily experience finding God to be infinite in Goodness and Mercy, I cannot but believe he hath effectually provided for their Salvation as well as ours, tho the ordinary means is wanting, as at this day in many parts of the World : for tho Faith is not now begotten in them by preaching and hearing, as with us at this day ; yet God hath many ways to instruct, and communicate his Will

to Man, *Job* 33. yea to reveal Christ in such manner and ways as may be available; for Jesus Christ, who took Man's Nature upon him, and who hath taken away their original Guilt, and who *enlightens every Man that comes into the World*, may, by the Operation of his Spirit (how and when he pleaseth) so help them to improve their single Talent of Reason, and the Light set up in their Consciences, which may so perfect what is wanting of the ordinary means, *that many thousands*, according to our Saviour's words, *Mat. 8. 11. shall come from the East and the West, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of Heaven*, when the Children of the Visible Kingdom, or Church, who judged themselves the sole Inheritors of it, and all the rest of the World but Castaways, shall be shut out: and if you look *Psal. 87.* you may see that those that had their natural Birth in *Rahab, Tyre, Ethiopia, Philistia, Babylon*, shall be accounted as born in the Spiritual *Zion*, or Church of God.

And tho the Lord in his Wisdom and Mercy, is pleased to vouchsafe a greater measure of Grace, Light, and Knowledg, and of Salvation, unto us than unto them; yet hath not God left himself without Witness, all the common Providences of God being given to direct Men to seek the Lord. In *Rom. 2. 14, 15.* we read, that
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the Gentiles which have not the Law, do by Nature the things, &c. That Law which was given in two Tables of Stone, was that which was purely moral, and imprinted in their Hearts; namely, that *God is to be worshipped, that Parents should be honoured, and in a word, to do to all as they would be done to:* These were Duties written in the very Book of Nature; and, tho they have not the Evangelical Law in the preaching of the Gospel as we have, become a Law to themselves; and by observing the Dictates of that Light, living up to a true informed Conscience, and to that Law which warreth against the rebellious Lusts in their Members, have gradually so prevailed with them, as to bring them to a good measure of conformity to the Will of God, and have quite outdone many Christians in their practices.

Mar. What tho; yet if Christ, as Mediator, be not some-way made known to Men, they are lost for ever; *He that believeth on the Son hath Life, and he that believeth not on the Son hath not Life.* But you seem to hold, that it is not absolutely necessary to Salvation to know Christ, and him crucified, as Mediator, but to live up to that which God hath manifested to them, and to have some Notions of Universal Grace and Mercy in the Divine Essence: But I must tell you, all that ever

were saved before Christ came, were saved, not by living up to that Light which God had given to all Men, or by living up to a true conformity to the Law planted in their Hearts, or by believing God was merciful and gracious, but by believing on Christ who was to come to be a Sacrifice for their Sins; and all that are saved since our Saviour's coming, do in some measure know and believe in Jesus Christ that died without the Gates of *Jerusalem*.

Philad. Have you forgot that you told me that I went too far to assert the Salvation of all those that died in Infancy, I not being the Sovereign Lord and Judge of all? and now are you not guilty of the same, thus to determine the final State of all Men, both before and since Christ's coming in the Flesh, as if none were saved but only such as distinctly knew Jesus Christ, the Seed of the Woman, that was to break the Serpent's Head, as he that was to offer himself a Sacrifice for Sin, seeing I believe neither you nor any other is able to prove, that no Heathen wanting the Letter of the Gospel, and the Oral Ministry of it, which is the ordinary Means to beget Faith, never yet believed on God to Justification, or were accepted with him? And whereas you say, none can be saved who di-

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ligerly frame their Lives according to the Light God hath given them, or live in a true conformity to the Law written in their Hearts : This is but your presumption ; for if God hath given them no other Law or Light to walk by, 'tis far more safe to leave them to the Lord (who will not gather where he hath not strewed) than thus to censure them ; for where much is given, much is required.

Mr. *Baxter* tells us, *More proof*, pag. 95.
 “ That as the *Jews* had, by Promises, Pro-
 “ phcies, and Types, more means to
 “ know God than other Nations ; so they
 “ were answerably obliged to more Know-
 “ ledg and Faith than other Nations were
 “ that had not or could not have their
 “ means.

Yea, Mr. *Calvin*, in his Epistle to the *French New Testament*, as quoted by Mr. *Goodwin*, says, “ After *Adam* was left in such
 “ confusion, he was fruitful in his cursed
 “ Seed, to bring forth a Generation like to
 “ himself, vicious, perverse, void and de-
 “ stitute of all Good, and abounding in
 “ Evil ; nevertheless the Lord of his
 “ Mercy (who doth not only love, but is
 “ himself Love and Charity) being yet
 “ willing, by his infinite Goodness, to love
 “ that which is not worthy of Love, hath
 “ not altogether lost and overwhelmed
 “ Men as their Sins did require, but hath

supported them in Sweetness and Pati-
 ence, giving them time and leasure to
 return to him, and set themselves to that
 Obedience from which they had strayed;
 and tho he did suffer them to go after
 the desires and wishes of their own
 Hearts, without Law, without Govern-
 ment, without any correction by his
 Word, yet he hath given them warning
 enough, which might have incited them
 to seek, taste, and find him, to know
 and honour him as it behoveth them:
 for he hath lifted up every where, and
 in all places and things, his Ensign and
 Arms, that there were none could pre-
 tend ignorance of the knowledg of so
 Sovereign a Lord; for that in all parts
 of the World, in Heaven and in Earth,
 he hath written and engraven the Glory
 of his Might, Goodness, Wisdom and
 Eternity. *St. Paul* therefore saith true,
 That the Lord never left himself with-
 out Witness, even towards those to
 whom he hath not sent the Knowledg of
 his Word; forasmuch as all Creatures
 might be Witnesses and Messengers of
 his Glory unto all Men, to draw them to
 seek him; and having found him, to
 welcome him and do him Homage, ac-
 cording to the Dignity of a Lord so
 Good, so Powerful, so Wise and Eter-
 nal; and also did help each other in its
 place

“ place to this Guest ; for the Birds sing-
 “ ing, sung God, Beasts cried aloud to him,
 “ the Elements stood in fear of him, Moun-
 “ tains reasoned with him, Rivers and
 “ Fountains cast their Eyes upon him,
 “ Herbs and Flowers smiled upon him ;
 “ altho indeed there was no necessity to
 “ seek him very far, by reason that each one
 “ might find him in his own self, being
 “ that we are all kept up and preserved
 “ by his Virtue dwelling in us : in the mean
 “ while, for to manifest more amply his
 “ Goodness and Infinite Clemency among
 “ Men, he hath not contented himself to
 “ instruct them all by such Documents as
 “ we have exprest, but hath especially gi-
 “ ven to understand his Voice to a cer-
 “ tain People. Surely here Mr. *Calvin*
 hath acknowledged that God hath vouch-
 safed sufficient Means to all whereby to
 come to the knowledg of him, and conse-
 quently to repent and believe in him.

Philet. But without Christ, and a Work
 of Grace upon the Heart, and Faith in him,
 none can be saved ; doth not our Saviour
 tell *Nicodemus*, John 3. 5. *Except a Man be*
born again of Water and of the Spirit, he can-
not enter into the Kingdom of God ? That is,
 he cannot be saved.

Philad. Do you think our Saviour did
 there mean the Kingdom of Glory ?

Philet. Yea, doubtless.

Philad.

Philad. I rather think that Christ spoke it of the Kingdom of Grace, or the Visible Church of Christ, that none could not, or at least wise ought not come into it without Regeneration and holy Baptism; yet may a Person be a Member of the Universal Church, yea and be received a Member of the Triumphant Church in Heaven, that may not be a Member of the Visible Church of Christ here on Earth: for there are two sorts of Persons that cannot (in an ordinary way) be regenerated and born again, which yet may and shall go to Heaven, to wit, Children and Idiots. So tho it is a truth, that without Jesus Christ there can be no Salvation; yet if there is no Salvation without believing on the Name of the Lord Jesus, what then will become of these, and all dying Infants, who neither have Faith, nor are regenerated? and yet they shall have Salvation by him. Now as God hath one way to bring Persons of Age to Heaven, and another way to bring Infants, why may not those that never had the means to know the Mediator particularly and distinctly, have Salvation by him? Infants, and those many millions of Heathens in some remote parts of the Earth, to whom the Gospel was never preached, must unavoidably and eternally perish, if God hath provided no other means of Salvation by Christ, than such a way of preaching it, as is vouchsafed

safed to us. We know that the Judgment
 of God will be according to Equity : he
 knows what he hath laid down, what he
 hath given, and what to require, and how
 to reward every Man according to his
 Works ; and his Mercys are infinitely ex-
 tended over all his Works ; and he is not so
 severe as to exact more than frail Man is a-
 ble to perform, but according to what light
 and knowledg he hath given him ; and
 whosoever worship God, and do his Will,
 according to the manifestation which he
 hath given them of his Will, shall be ac-
 cepted of him, *Acts* 10. 34, 35. He that
 improves one Talent well, shall be accepted
 as well as he that improves five ; for surely
 the Almighty will never require any more
 of a Man than he hath given him : therefore
 I believe that all those that are obedient
 to that Light or Law which the Lord hath
 given them, endeavouring according to their
 measure an exact conformity to the Divine
 Will, shall be happy ; and it would be a
 great piece of uncharitableness to exclude
 them from all interest in Christ, and to allow
 none to have any saving benefit by Christ's
 Death but such as own the *true Orthodox*
Faith (as it is called by some) we may by
 this damn by wholesale, not only all the
Gentile Nations, but also most other Chri-
 stians who have erred in Judgment, and
 have unwittingly mistaken the Truth,
 which

God forbid. Tho many in our days (that without hopes or sense of their condition) exclude them from any part in Christ, or the Church of God, as did the *Jews* of old, who reputed themselves the only Children of the Kingdom, boasted of their Privileges, as having *Abraham* to their Father, and cried the *Temple of the Lord*, how much soever they abused the means, and neglected God, and reputed the *Gentiles* but Castaways not being circumcised, nor brought into the visible *Jewish* Church-state; yet had the Lord a regard to them, when the Visible Church-state extended it self no farther than the Familys of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, as appears by the effect which God's Spirit had upon many others, as *Job*, *Melchizedeck*, &c. And how did the Lord secretly teach and instruct *Abimelech*, *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Cyrus*, *Darius*, in the Old Testament? And the Heathens have at this day, and before Christ's coming in the flesh had some glimpse of his coming into the World, as may be seen in the *Sibyls* Verses, and many others: nay, they came to enjoy in some measure the Doctrine of Christ's coming; and hath not the Gospel-sound gone thro the World? and *Paul* saith, that the *Gentiles*, who did by *Nature* the things contained in the Law, Rom. 2. were counted the Circumcision; yea, the Law should judg those that are circumcised in the
Flesh,

Flesh, if they broke it : and so tho many boast of the Word and Sacrament of the Gospel amongst them, and despise others, tho the Means of Grace be abused, the Gospel-Call neglected, the Grace of God turned into wantonness, and seek Gain by pretending Godliness ; yet those that have less means, and yet have obeyed them, shall be received, and others rejected ; *for many are called, but few chosen.*

And I beseech you all that set light by them, take heed lest you become guilty of as great a Sin as the Heathen Nations are in worshiping false Gods, by imputing that to the true God, which is proper only to the Devil ; for it was the saying of a very Learned Man, Mr. *Withers* in his *Paraphrase upon the Lord's Prayer*, page 94. speaking something of the Doctrine of Reprobation without respect to Sin, " That what-
 " soever opinion others may have of it, I
 " conceive that all the Idolatries of the
 " Heathens heretofore, in communicating
 " to Men, Beasts or Devils, the Honour
 " and Attributes which are due to God
 " only, yea and the crucifying of Christ
 " added thereunto, amount not to so
 " hainous an Offence as their Crimes who
 " are knowingly guilty of this Sin ; be-
 " cause it seems to me more pardonable to
 " ascribe to a base Creature part of that
 " Honour which is due to God, than to
 " im-

" impute that unto him which is proper to
 " none but the Devil. And in his *Parallel*
lo-Grammaion, p. 61. he saith, " That it is
 " an extraordinary high affront put upon
 " God, and more heinous than Murder
 " Adultery, and all other mere carnal Sins
 " whatsoever, yea more heinous than those
 " the Jews committed by their Idolatries,
 " killing the Prophets, and crucifying
 " Christ in the Flesh, for the last was but a
 " Sin against his Humanity, and their Idol-
 " latries but the ascribing some part of that
 " Honour to the Creature which is due to
 " God only; whereas the limiting God's
 " Universal Grace in Christ, with the con-
 " comitant Doctrine, and the Consequences
 " thence arising, and the imputing to
 " God an eternal Reprobation of the great-
 " est part of Mankind, before they had
 " done good or evil, for those Sins which
 " they blasphemously say he necessitates
 " them to commit, to shew his Justice, and
 " manifest his hatred to Sin, is a despoiling
 " him of his Divine Nature, and ascribing
 " unto him that which belongs only to the
 " Devil.

Mar. That which the *Gentiles* receive, is
 but common Grace, and the improvement
 of any common Gift will not save any; and
 should the Gospel be preached to them, it
 would be of no saving use to them unless
 there be special Grace in the Soul.

Philet.

Philet. That's true, the Gospel may be preached a thousand times over; and yet without the mighty Power of God none can receive it; 'tis not the Power of God to Salvation, 'tis but the external Offers of Grace, or the external Dispensation of Grace by the Word.

Philad. Here's off and on: sometimes Christ died for all, that the Gospel might be preached to all, and those that the Gospel is not sent to, you look upon them as Castaways; and yet at last whether it be sent or not, 'tis all one, there's nothing in it but a dead Letter: but, pray tell me, is not the Gospel called the *Ministry of the Spirit*?

Philet. Yea, in opposition to the Law.

Philad. Well then, I must tell you, that there is such a power of the Spirit accompanying of it (where it is faithfully preached) as is sufficient for the conversion of Sinners, or to leave them without excuse if they believe it not, yea to judge them at the last day: tho' 'tis true, 'tis but the instrumental Means to beget Souls to God; for the original cause of our conversion is the Love of God the Father, *John 3. 16. Rom. 5. 6, 8, 10. 1 Pet. 3. 18.* The Blood of Christ is the meritorious Cause, the efficient or working Cause is the Power of God's Grace or Spirit, the Ministerial Cause is the preaching of the Gospel, *Rom. 10.* so
tho

tho God alone decrees it, Christ alone meriteth it, the Spirit sealeth it, yet the Gospel revealeth it, Faith apprehendeth it, and so persons come to be justified and saved: So tho God, Christ, and the Spirit, are the efficient Cause of Righteousness and Salvation, yet the instrumental Means of Salvation is not to be cast away.

Philet. But there must be special Grace in the Soul before God calls any by the Gospel, or else they could not give consent to his Call: No, there must be a Principle of Grace infused into the Souls of Men, or they could not consent. To say the stony Heart, dead Man, old Nature, gives consent, is very incongruous; the Tree must first be good before it can produce good Fruit, there must be first a Sun, then a Beam; first a Fountain, then a Stream.

Philad. It seems by what you say, a Man must be a spiritual Man before the Lord calls him, and before he hears or receives the Word; which is a mistake, for there is no Man but is carnal before he receiveth the teaching of the Almighty, and by receiving the teaching of the Lord, becomes spiritual; for *Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.* Mr. Brown, in his *Scripture Redemption*, saith, *James 1. 18.* "Of his own Will begat he us, by the Word of Truth; 'tis a Life-Creating Word," *John 6. 63.* and therefore called the Word of

“ of Life, Phil. 2. 16. because through and
 “ by the word Life is wrought in us, *John*
 “ 5. 25. and Faith wrought in us, *Rom.* 10.
 “ and is a glorious Instrument of God’s
 “ saving Power, *Rom.* 1. 16. and called
 “ the Grace of God, *Acts* 13. 47. that
 “ comes to us by his Grace, *Heb.* 12. 1.
 “ 1 *Pet.* 5. 12. and this way are we to ex-
 “ pect Grace from him; and where the
 “ Word of Life is preached, there and
 “ then God seeks, and sues to us to receive
 “ his Grace; yea, and through the Spirit
 “ bestows so much Grace upon all Men,
 “ when the Word of Faith is preached, as
 “ is sufficient to beget Faith in them, and
 “ to carry on their saving Conversion gra-
 “ dually unto the end, *Mat.* 11. 21. *Titus*
 3. 4. 1 *Pet.* 1. 23. & 2. 9. *James* 1. 18.
 2 *Cor.* 3. 6. *Heb.* 4. 12. observe *Acts* 26.
 18.

Dr. *Holmes* upon the *Golden Chain of Sal-*
vation, page 158. upon the Question, *How*
shall I come by the gift of Faith? Answers,
 “ That the same Gospel that offers Christ,
 “ operates Faith; the same Spirit that
 “ inspired the Penmen of the Holy Scrip-
 “ tures, doth co-operate, and it operates
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Philet. I believe those that the Gospel is preached to, if they unfeignedly repent of their Sins, believe on him, shall without all question be saved by and through the Death of Christ; for the reason why Men are condemned, is, because they believe not on the only begotten Son of God.

Philad. Well said, *Philetus*, now you have ruin'd your self upon these two Points, which you have laboured this day to avoid.

The first is this, That Christ died for those that miss Salvation through unbelief; for if the Lord by the Gospel promised Salvation to all Men, without exception, in case they do believe on Christ (which you cannot deny) it roundly follows that Christ must needs have purchased it for them by his Blood; for there is no Salvation without Remission of Sins, nor no Remission without shedding of Blood: neither could their believing procure any other Salvation to them, but only that which was fully purchased for them by the Blood of Christ, there being no Salvation for any Man upon any Terms or Conditions whatsoever, unless Christ hath purchased it for them by his Blood. Therefore unless you do suppose that Christ shed his Blood for all, you cannot say with any truth, that if they believe they shall be saved: Can you imagine that their believing, or not believing, should

should any ways alter the Lord's Intentions concerning them in the Death of Christ, or cause them to be bought with his Blood, which were not bought before? or whether doth the Lord in the Gospel assure Persons of such a Salvation which was never so much as intended to be purchased for them? This would be to represent the Lord extremely unlike himself, which none dare affirm that have any regard to the Honour and Glory of God.

The second is this, That those that perish through unbelief, were through Grace put in a possibility of believing and embracing Christ as tendered to them. God will not condemn Souls for not believing that which was impossible for them to believe. If unbelief be the condemning Sin, and that Men are condemned for not believing, it follows against all contradiction, that all Men at one time or another are put into such a capacity, as that thro the Grace of God they may be saved. Thus have you in a few words pull'd down with your own hands the main building which you have in your Discourse this day laboured to make stand. But is this your usual way, to do and undo? Have you not told us, that God gave not his Son to die for all, and yet he offers his Grace to all; and that there is no Universal Redemption, and yet Christ is universally tendered to all; that God de-

creed, not only the Suffering, but the Sins of the Reprobates, and yet their destruction is of themselves; that Men miss Salvation because of unbelief, yet God never gave them a power to believe, nor a Christ to believe in; and that Men must strive to lay hold upon Christ, and come up to the terms upon which Salvation is tendered and promised; and yet have no power to do it, but are as passive as Stones or dead Men: How can you make these things stand together?

Philet. I said at the first that I feared you were one of those that held the vile Opinion of Free-will.

Philad. This term of Free-will is made use of by almost every captious Person, and cast as Dung in the Face of many of the Lord's People; and that by many that know not what they mean by it. I have often heard Free-will mentioned by the Tongues, and in the Books of those of your way, yet I never, to my knowledg, found it defined; but surely as you hold it, or suppose others to hold it, it is some vile Opinion indeed: would any else call it *curst Free-will*; and those that they think hold it, *damned Free-willers*; or in their Prayers desire that God would confound all that hold it?

Mar. Why, do you not pray that God would bring down *Mystery Babylon*, and all others her Adherents? and this is one of

of her Master-pieces, &c. 'tis the *Great Dragon*.

Philad. Well, but now I find Free-will as much owned by those of your way, as by any that I know amongst us; for the Assembly of Divines, in their *Confession of Faith*, Chap. 9. expressly say, "God hath
 "indued the Will of Man with that natural Liberty, that it is neither forced,
 "nor by any absolute necessity of Nature
 "determined to do good or evil. And Mr. Baxter in his Preface to his *Call to the Unconverted*, speaks thus, "For Free-
 "will, *Origen* is condemned by *Epiphanius*
 "for saying, Man had lost the Image of
 "God: this Image is twofold; 1st. Natural, that is, Reason and Free-will. 2ly.
 "Qualitative, that is, our Holiness; this
 "is lost, and by Grace restored. And he farther saith, "That *Austin* as well as
 "Pelagius, Calvin as well as the *Arminians*,
 "the *Dominicans* as well as the *Jesuits*, all
 "generally maintain, that Man hath Free-
 "will. Yea, he tells us, "no Man of Brains
 "can deny that Man hath a Will naturally
 "free, and is a self-determining Principle,
 "tho not freed from evil dispositions. Can you name any amongst us that hold more than these your Brethren hold? For what can these mean by it less than this, that the Will of Man now after the fall of *Adam* in natural Actions, is as

free as ever it was? for tho by the Fall of *Adam*, all the Faculties of the Soul, *viz.* Reason, Judgment, Affections, Understanding, Will, Power, and Freedom to act, are greatly bruised, much weakned and dulled, yet not one of them is wholly lost; and indeed the Soul would be a nothing if it be denied the use of its Faculties; for as the Body without the Spirit is dead, and remains a lifeless Bulk, even so is the Soul if it doth not exert it self in the various actings and operations of its Power: and indeed if we have not a Free-will in a sufficient Measure, to do or leave undone, chuse or refuse, then were our Faculties inferiour to those of Beasts, who do chuse, or leave, such means of preservation as are set before them; and as the Will of Man in natural Actions is free, even so it is as really free in spiritual, when it is made so by the Spirit and Grace of God; or else how should we run the ways of God's Commandments, if we have not the liberty of our Souls, and will to do it?

Therefore when you curse and damn Free-will, and Free-willers at that rate as you do, you must surely mean something else than what your Friends mean, or what I mentioned last; pray tell me what it is.

Mar. Why, you say, Men may be saved if they will; which is so gross an Error, that they must be very blind that cannot see

see it; for if it was so, Men might have Heaven for willing, and none would go to Hell: but *it is not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that sheweth Mercy*, Rom. 9. 16.

Philad. That's true, if Men might have Heaven for wishing or willing, few would be so fool-hardy as to go to Hell: Who would, but with *Balaam, die the Death of the Righteous?* Who would but have all Tears wiped away from their Eyes, and live in Bliss and Glory, if God would save Persons for their good Wishes and Desires, and give them Heaven tho they never minded it all their days so as to please God? they deserve to go to Hell, that would not have Heaven upon this account, that think Heaven not worth a Wish. And as to your Scriptures, the Apostle sheweth that the *Jews* had a Will to be saved; and the reason why they fell short of Justification, was not for want of willing or running, but for not willing and running in a right way; they sought it not by Faith, but by the Works of the Law: *They being ignorant of God's Righteousness, and going about to establish their own*, Rom. 10. 3. so mist of Justification: But surely this is not that Free-will you so much cry out of; for where can you find such Free-willers that hold Heaven may be had for wishing for?

Philet. But however you hold, that you have naturally such a power and freedom of Will, that when you would do good you can.

Philad. 'Tis a mistake, we do not say we have it from Nature, but from Grace; for as we are in our depraved Nature, we can neither do nor will ought that is acceptable and good: but as in Grace we may, for then to will is present with us; yea, and ever since the Promise was made, that *the Seed of the Woman should bruise the Serpent's Head*, the Lord doth first or last enlighten every Man that cometh into the World, vouchsafing such renewing of his Will, and such a perpetual co-assistance to perform what shall be accepted, if persons do not wilfully, maliciously, and finally resist his Grace; so that none of our Sins can justly be charged upon any deficiency in him: Our blessed Saviour tells them, the Word was near them, and in them; and that he was the Light that enlightens every Man.

Yet if by Free-will you mean a single Power in the Creature to convert it self: I know none this day in *England* that hold such an Opinion; however I utterly renounce such an Opinion as vile, it being to ascribe too much to humane Nature. It must needs be a pernicious Principle for any to believe, that a Man by the sole power of
regu-

regulating of his own Will and Reason, can obtain Eternal Salvation; this would make the suffering of Christ altogether fruitless: and I believe also that none hath any will or power of himself, without God, to do any thing that's good; or to attain to a supernatural End, but by the Assistance of Divine Grace: and therefore there is an absolute necessity of seeking and imploring the saving supernatural aid and help of the Spirit of that God, from whom all our Abilities are derived to us. And as to what you say we hold, that when we would do good, we can: I say, that through the Grace of God we may avoid many more Sins than we daily do avoid, and do more good than we do: tell me, are any of us laid under a necessity of sinning? cannot we forbear many Sins which we daily run into? and do we really do what God by his Grace hath impowred us to do in our Duty to God and Man, and in avoiding Sin? If you say we can do no otherwise, then is all your preaching vain, yea ridiculous; for if an irresistible Cause overpower us, that we can do no otherwise, no Man that is truly master of his own Reason, will ever spend his time and strength to exhort any to repent of doing that which they could not but do, or omitting of that which was never in their power to effect. If you say,
that

that by the Grace of God we may do the one or the other, you own Free-will as much as I.

For this is the Free-will (if we may call it so) that I hold, *viz.* That God Almighty hath (of his Free Love and Grace) imparted a measure of himself, or endowed Mankind with those Abilities to perform whatsoever he requires of them, and in-joins them to; God never gives a Command, but he gives a Power, or else their Disobedience shall not be their Condemnation: if this be a vile Opinion, then I confess I am vile; for if God requires us to believe, and yet administers not sufficient Grace and Strength to believe, all our endeavours are vain and fruitless; Men cannot make Brick till Straw be given them: for the Lord to prescribe Dutys to us, and annex Penalties upon the non-performance of them, as to punish with Eternal Death all those that are disobedient to his Will, and yet to deny his Grace and Assistance, without which it is impossible to keep them; this is to represent the Lord (as I once said before) too much like cruel *Pharaoh*, that made the Lives of his People bitter to them, by laying heavy Burdens, in requiring the tale of Brick, and yet denying Straw, the fit Materials; or as the evil Servant in the Parable stiled him, *a hard Master, reaping where he hath not sowed.*

Philet.

Philet. I tell you we are altogether passive in the Work of Conversion ; we are like Saws or Axes, that cannot move any otherwise than the Hand guides or forces them.

Philad. Your comparing Persons to Saws and Axes, being altogether passive in comparison, is a thing I do not understand ; for we are not Saws or Axes without Sense or Reason ; but by God's free Gift, and his free Grace, we have received Liberty and Ability to accept of his Love, and to accept of his Mercy when tendred to us, and to perform those things which God requires of us in order to our Salvation ; yea, through the Lord's assisting Grace (which is never wanting to any but those that are wanting to themselves) we have received such a Power as to inable us to perform the Will of God, when the choice of Good and Evil is set before us, *Dent.* 30. 19.

Mar. No more than the Stones in the street.

Philad. Why then Man can have no more Sin nor Righteousness in him than a Stone : if Man in the Work of Conversion be like a Stock or Stone, merely passive, doing nothing ; then in Conversion Persons neither hear, nor repent, nor turn from Sin to the Lord, nor believe in Christ : and how any are truly regenerated without these,

these, I know not; and if these are to be done in Conversion, pray who is active in this Work, if the Party regenerated be not?

And if by God's Free Grace Man hath not the least power of his Will, but is merely passive in all; why then should the Lord so passionately complain of Mens obstinacy? and why did Christ wonder at the unbelief of many? *Mark 6. 6.* Here was not the least cause for Christ to marvel at the unbelief of any, when it never was in their power to believe, unless Christ should wonder that Man should act and do more than he had power to do, or more than all the Creatures in Heaven or Earth could enable him to do. Nay, if Men be wholly as passive as Stones, and can neither repent nor believe, by means of those Abilities vouchsafed to them by the Lord, then can no reward nor punishment be justly awarded to any Man for believing or not believing: for if Faith and Repentance be wrought in Man only by the Omnipotent and Irresistible Power of God, without Man, then cannot that Obedience be a free Obedience: and in vain is it required of Man, when it is to be wrought by such a Force as cannot be resisted; neither can any Man be rewarded as one truly and really obedient. And in this case we may safely affirm, that the Lord rewards him-

himself, and not the Man who is truly passive, doing nothing; or if any thing, 'tis purely effected by the Force of another: for what things are produced in us by God's irresistible Omnipotency without us, cannot of right come under the name of Obedience, and therefore cannot justly be rewarded, or judged worthy of any commendation. *Remonstrants Confession*, pag. 148. Also Eternal Punishment is unjustly and cruelly inflicted on him that doth not repent and believe, when he had no power to do either: but the want of it was through the alone defect of irresistible Grace; and should the Lord punish Men for not repenting and believing, he should punish them for not attempting to make themselves equal in Power with himself; and then, pray, to what purpose are all the inviting Promises of Life and Glory, and all the Dangers that Souls expose themselves to, expressed in the Scripture, and pressed so much by your Preachers, if we through Grace have not power to obtain the one, or escape the other?

Very well saith S. *Jerom*, as quoted by Dr. *Goodman* in his *Parable of the Prodigal Son*, p. 100. "God bound not Man under the rigid Bonds of Necessity, whereby he should be forcibly over-ruled and determined to one thing, but put him in a capacity of making his own choice, to
"the

“ the end that being thereby distinguished
 “ from Beasts, and more like his Maker, he
 “ might be capable of Virtue and Reward;
 “ and that as nothing should make him mi-
 “ serable without his own act and consent,
 “ so he might have the comfort and de-
 “ light of co-operating freely towards his
 “ own Good and Felicity.

Philet. If God works Conversion, not in
 an insuperable or irresistible way, then he
 works it in a dependent way, putting
 Man's Will in an *Æquilibrium* (or even Bal-
 lance) That this is not God's way appears,
 because he works Conversion in such a way
 as is most depressive of the Creature, and
 exaltive of himself. But now by what you
 say, Grace only sets the Will in an *Æqui-
 librium*, and that's all, and Free-will must do
 the business; this is a robbing God of his
 Glory, and ascribing to our selves more
 than belongs to us.

Philad. It's rather an honouring of him,
 by laying all the blame of our Misdoings
 upon our selves, and acknowledging his
 free Grace, in giving us not only time, but
 abilities and means to know the Lord, and
 to cleave to him, and to work with God
 when he is pleased to be moving upon our
 Hearts, Wills, and Consciences, by his
 Divine Grace, that so we might be curbed
 and restrained from being carried head-
 long into destruction by the sway of our
 unruly Lusts.

Yea,

Yea, that which I affirm is as depressive of the Creature, and as exaltive of God's Glory as what you hold, nay more (as I shall make appear by and by) Where have I said, that we are able to do any thing that's good, to repent, believe, or obey the Lord, and serve him acceptably, by our own natural strength, without the effectual assistance of Divine Grace? I say, this is not possible now for Man in his lapsed state, tho it be generally held, that Man had at the first a perfect liberty to stand or fall in an equal possibility of sinning, or not sinning. If this were so, then his condition was in *Æquilibrio*, and it was in the Creatures' choice to turn the Scales: but long he did not stand in this equal State, for being tempted to aspire above his place, at the very first onset, at the first temptation he lost his Innocency, and fell into a depraved State, and so his Will became infirm relation to its acting for Virtue and Goodness. But now God having pity on fallen Man, in his infinite Goodness and Wisdom found out a way to restore him to a more noble and excellent State than *Adam* enjoyed, which was by the promised Seed; and what perfection the Will had in the state of perfect Nature, is restored by the Spirit of Grace. So that a good and real Christian may be said to enjoy as free a Will by Grace since the Fall, as *Adam* had
by

by Nature before the Fall; John 8. 36. *If the Son make you free, you shall be free indeed.*

Philet. 'Tis Christ's work to act Faith, and God is said to give Faith and Repentance, which are called his Gift.

Philad. I acknowledg that we are all of us, from first to last, indebted to Divine Grace for all we do; all good and pious Actions are begun, carried on, and perfected by the Lord; 'tis God that gives Power and Ability, 'tis he that enables People to repent and believe, yea, makes Persons willing actually to repent, yea, and supports them in the act of repenting and believing; and so the whole of all Good in us is of free Love, and not of Nature. The Lord is both the Author and Finisher of our Faith. If I be better than any Man, it is God that makes me differ; and therefore he that will glory, let him glory in the Lord, saying with the Psalmist, *Psal. 115. 1. Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy Name be the praise;* and therefore we stand bound to make that humble acknowledgment, as *Paul* did *1 Cor. 15. 10.* that by the Grace of God I am what I am, &c. What good we do, 'tis not by our own natural Abilities, or the power of natural Reason, but by the powerful influence of Divine Grace, *James 1. 17. John 15. 5. 1 Pet. 5. 10.* And we may all say as *Holy David* did, *1 Chron.*

29. 11, to 17. So that you may see that I am none of those that hold that we are converted by the power of our own Free-will. Neither have we any saving Faith of our selves, *Mat. 11. 17. & 13. 11. & 16. 17. & 7. 7. John 3. 5.* But it is, as I said before, wholly to be ascribed to the Grace of God in Christ as the principal and primary Cause.

Now as to Faith and Repentance being the Gift of God, this is a truth : God is said to give Faith and Repentance, yea, to intend the Salvation of all Men, when he vouchsafeth a sufficiency of means. Now Faith is taken many ways ; sometimes, and very frequently, 'tis taken for the Gospel, *Acts 6. 7. Gal. 1. 23.* So it is the Gift of God, and he is said to give Faith and Repentance when he gives the Gospel, which is the Word of Faith ; and so Faith is the Gift of God ; and when any Soul is by the goodness of God led to repentance, God is said to give Repentance. Also God gives the power or ability to repent and believe, or else Man could do neither ; yet doth not God's Grace destroy our Duty, tho God gives not only Grace necessary, but also sufficient for yielding Faith and Obedience : yet the Act or Duty of believing is not God's Work, but Man's, *Heb. 11. Rom. 10. 17. James 3. 2.* And the Person that is regenerate, must be so far active in

the Work, that the Work it self may be as truly and properly ascribed unto Man, and called his, as it is ascribed to God, and called his Gift: now this you must believe, unless you have so far forsaken your Reason, as to say, that Christ acts the Creature's Actions, and so Jesus Christ repents, and Jesus Christ believes, and Man doth nothing. But surely we stand bound to believe, repent, and obey the Lord if we expect Salvation; these are our own acts, and 'tis impossible they should be the acts of Christ; for he that is said to act any action, is said to do it. Now if when we are exhorted to do these Duties, Christ should do them for us while we sit still; what sense must we make of Scripture? must Jesus Christ break off his Sins by Repentance, and amend his evil ways and doings? or must Christ believe in Christ, or walk in the steps of Christ? And from hence it will infallibly follow, that Persons shall be damned, because God did not only make them Believers by an irresistible Power, but also act their Work too. Saith *Paul*, Rom. 8. *If ye through the Spirit*, not the Spirit without you, nor ye without the Spirit; intimating that Man must be an Agent in the Work, it must be his own act, and therefore he is not wholly passive: neither have we ground to believe God will work these in such a way as shall be impossible to be frustrated.

Philet.

Philet. But if God works Conversion in a resistible way, still Free-Grace loseth the triumph, and Free will takes the Crown : but when God works, he works irresistibly, Men cannot resist his Will ; if he works, none can hinder it.

Philad. I believe that God hath and still works, and none can be able to hinder ; such are the Works of Creation and Redemption, &c. When Man was fallen, none could hinder the Lord from setting his Love upon him, nor hinder him from shewing Mercy to him, in sending his only Son to die for them ; nor hinder the planting of his Will, and Light in their Hearts, convincing them of Sin : Nor could the *Jews* of old, or any in our days, hinder or prevent God from rising early, and sending his Prophets and Ministers to call Persons to Repentance ; nor hinder him from administering Grace and Mercy to them : nor is it in the power of Man to frustrate God in raising up Persons from the dead in the Resurrection, and setting the Godly with Christ in Glory, and all the Rejecters of his Grace and Love in endless Misery.

Neither do I deny but God hath, and may still if he please, convert some by an irresistible Power ; we must not dare to limit the Holy One of *Israel* in any of his Ways : yet it is not God's usual way of

working to force Persons against their Wills to be Holy, and to accept of Life; but he is pressing by his Holy Spirit, and by his Word and Ministers, which is the ordinary way that the Lord takes to beget Faith, &c. and therefore Gospel-Ministers are said, 2 Cor. 6. 1. to be *workers together with God*; that is, Ministers do co-operate with God in order to one and the same effect; not that Ministers in their pressing and preaching should so work with God, as to be able to do as much as God himself doth in perswading Men, but rather they work after one and the same way: Ministers in their preaching incline and move the Heart of Men to accept of Christ; and this he doth perswadingly, without forcing or necessitating their Wills to such or such Election: this is God's usual way of working in the dispensation of his Divine Will.

Philet. But I tell you 'tis effected by the irresistible act of free Grace, Persons are altogether passive in the work of Conversion, yea have no more power to stir than *Lazarus* had when he had lain four days in the Grave. Persons are dead in Sins and Trespasses; and what less than the almighty Power of God can cause them to live a spiritual Life, I do not know. You ought not to believe there is any annexed Power in the act of Conversion; doth not the Apostle,

file, *Ephes. 1. 19, 20.* speak of the exceeding greatness of the Lord's Power, wrought in them that believe, according to his mighty Power which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead?

Philad. As for your urging Christ and *Lazarus* being both dead, to prove Persons as unable to act in Conversion, it is impertinent: for tho the Lord in raising up Christ did the work wholly of himself by his mighty Power, neither was *Lazarus* able to act any thing in the Grave towards restoring his Life; yet in the Work of conversion, the Lord comes to a Creature which he hath by free Grace furnished with Abilities to do what he requires of him. And *Lazarus* after he heard the Voice of the Lord, and received Life, was active, and came forth; and so when Persons hear the Voice of the Lord, and are thereby raised from a death in Sin, or a deadly custom of Sinning, to live soberly, justly, and godly, this is said to be a raising from the Dead, and a new Creation begotten again, and by Faith and Repentance making new Creatures: tho the Lord bestoweth Grace sufficient for the yielding to the Voice of the Lord when he calleth them by the Gospel, yet through the alone proper fault of Man it becomes unfruitful; for the Lord doth not usually come to Persons in such a mighty Whirlwind, as *1 Kings 19. 11.* to

force their consent, and carry them headlong to their duty, and irresistibly compel them to embrace eternal Happiness, and shew such a Miracle of his mighty Power, as he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, or upon *Lazarus* when he had lain four days dead in the Grave.

Now it is true, the Power by which Christ and *Lazarus* were raised from the Dead was irresistible, neither were they able to oppose it; but those ways which the Lord usually takes to bring Mens Wills into a compliance with his own, is not so irresistible that they cannot any ways oppose it. How very frequently have Persons grieved the Spirit of God, and resisted the Holy Ghost, and prefer'd a darling Sin, and a beloved Corruption, before the Grace of God? but you seem to hold that no Sinner is converted without such an Omnipotent Power put forth for his conversion as was wrought in Christ, &c. and therefore cannot be resisted; but this is more than you can prove, either in your own conversion or any others. Tho you sometimes tell us how passive Persons are in Conversion; yet at other times you make Faith and Repentance two parts of Regeneration; and how Persons can be said to have either, and yet be passive, neither I nor you know. Besides, when those of your way give us an account of the Conversion of others, they tell

tell us of the frequent resisting the Lord's striving with them, and the great wrestlings which have been between Faith and Reason, Flesh and Spirit, and the many Prayers, Tears and Agonys Persons have gon through before the new Birth hath been compleated.

Pray do but consider what Mr. *Keach* hath written in his *Travels of true Godliness*: "The visits that God gave to all sorts
 " of People, Professors and Profane, the
 " pains he took with them to have them
 " open the Doors to him, and yet could
 " find none that would entertain him;
 " and the bitter lamentations Godliness
 " makes thereupon, that he may beg, as it
 " were, upon his bare Knees to be entertained by them, but in vain; for they will
 " not mind him, nor take him in, but put
 " him off from day to day till Death seize
 " them: Surely if Persons were as dead,
 " and as unable to act in Conversion, as
 " *Lazarus* that had lain four days dead in
 " the Grave, here was no reason for Godliness to complain, but rather others
 " might complain, because Godliness did
 " not break open the Doors, and rouse
 " these dead Souls out of the sleep of Sin,
 " and cause them, by an irresistible Power, to receive him. And at last when
 " they fully embraced him, yet he was
 " forced to be laborious, as you may see,

pag. 158, 159. " Yea, Godliness puts him
 " upon endeavouring to obtain the Bless-
 " sing by his diligence and pains in God's
 " ways, it being the only way to be rich
 " in God ; and plainly tells him, that un-
 " less he will stir and labour to open the
 " Door, he shall never come into his
 " House ; and so shows him how teach-
 " able the Moral of that Fable in *Aesop* is,
 " of a Man that was fallen into a Ditch,
 " and lying there almost drowned, who
 " calling to *Jupiter* to help him out, re-
 " ceived this Answer, *Endeavour to get out,*
 " *and Jupiter will help thee.* Surely this
 could not be said to those that are altoge-
 ther passive in Conversion, or to such as
 could not but obey.

And indeed too often, the Lord knows,
 do poor frail Men make a repulse against
 the Operation of God's Spirit and Grace
 upon their Hearts ; and very seldom, if
 ever, doth the Lord work so omnipotent-
 ly or forcibly, that Men cannot but believe
 and obey him.

For he that saith, God worketh in us to
 chuse irresistibly, doth in effect say, he so
 works in us that we cannot chuse but chuse,
 which is nonsense ; and therefore consider
 these things.

First, He that is wrought upon by God
 to believe, obey, or persevere irresistibly,
 cannot possibly do otherwise.

Secondly,

Secondly, He that cannot possibly do otherwise than he doth, cannot possibly chuse but do what he doth.

Thirdly, He that cannot chuse but do what he doth, doth clearly do it whether he will or no.

Philet. The Apostle tells us, that *God works in us, to will and to do of his good pleasure*, Phil. 2. 12, 13. The Lord works upon the hearts of his Children by such over-ruling and prevailing force, that they cannot withstand it if they would.

Philad. It is God that works not only to do, but to will and to do ; by his preventing Grace he worketh in them to will, and by his assisting Grace to do, yet by neither so irresistibly, but that they *must work out their Salvation with fear and trembling* too. Grace doth not destroy, but strengthen, our Will. Is our choice or liberty lost, because it is guided and inabled to do that which is good ? *If I can do all things through him that strengthens me, then can I, through him, chuse the good, or refuse the evil ;* which would not be chose if it was whether I would or no.

Philet. Pray what say you to *Paul*, was not he converted by a most miraculous Operation, and a mighty Power ?

Philad. I know and believe that *Paul's* Conversion was effected in a very extraordinary way, and as miraculous as any we hear

hear or read of ; Christ himself appearing from Heaven, and speaking by audible Voice to him: neither do I deny but God may still, if he please, and no question doth in some special Cases, and in order to some great and special End, open the Hand of his Bounty much wider to some in the vouchsafement of the Means of Grace and Salvation, than ordinarily he doth to others. Yet to say all Conversion is so miraculous, or that God doth as much for the Conversion of every one that's converted, as he did for *Paul*, is not true; neither can you prove that *Paul's* Conversion was perfected by the Vision; for 'tis plain he was directed to *Ananias* to be farther instructed in those things that did relate to the Gospel, and what he was farther to do. Yea, and if you will compare this with *Acts* 26. 19. as powerful as this Call was, yet it did not (saith *Grotius*) take away the power of resisting. God will have voluntary Obedience, not forced, *Isa.* 50. 5. *Psal.* 95. 7. *Heb.* 3. 7, 8, 15. & 4. 7.

Mar. Whether you really intend it or no, yet you bring all to this, That Man meriteth his own Salvation; and he may thank himself if he be saved, because it's his own goodness and towardliness in improving that Universal Grace which others did not improve: so they are not
 saved

saved by mere Grace, nor from any special discriminating Grace from the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to them; and whereas God hath ordered it so that no Flesh should glory in his presence, you lay a Foundation for pride and self-conceit, and make poor provision for admiring free, special, discriminating Grace here, and to Eternity.

Philad. I do not find this term, discriminating Grace, in the Scripture; Grace properly signifies Love and Kindness, Favour and friendly Acceptance: and as for free-Love, free-Kindness, free-Favour, and free-Acceptance, there is nothing more required, but that it be not deserved, for that is undoubtedly free that is undeserved: so that what we do, or can do, doth not in the least oblige the Lord to bestow any Love or Favour upon us (which I have already shewed it cannot) still that of the Apostle will stand good, *Ephes. 2. 8. By Grace you are saved, through Faith, and that not of your selves, it is the Gift of God.* So that all boasting is excluded, since we cannot change our Hearts, cannot repent of our Sins, or believe on him by virtue of our own natural Abilities, but by the aid and assistance of Divine Grace. Man's Perfection and Felicity is derived from God, and we live daily in a necessary dependance upon him for his Grace, and the Aid of his Holy Spirit

Spirit to repair our Strength, and assist our Faculties, and every way to enable us to perform those Duties which are due to so Sovereign a Lord, and as it becometh Creatures to do.

Yet still we are to remember that his assisting Grace doth not destroy our Endeavours ; for as we can do nothing without God, so he will do nothing for us without our selves ; and as *God works in us to will and to do*, &c. so Persons are *to work out their own Salvation with fear and trembling*, and not think to sit still and take their ease, and live in a carnal state, without improving those means that God hath vouchsafed them to repent and believe, till the Lord by an irresistible Power pluck them out of their Sins. This we are not to expect, neither are we to thank our selves if we be saved, but God's free Love and Bounty is to be acknowledged the sole cause of our Salvation ; neither can it be any diminution to Divine Goodness to say, that unless Man doth concur with the first Cause, the End cannot be obtained, since Faith, Repentance, and Obedience to the Lord, is made a condition with reference to Eternal Life. Suppose a Prince should see one that has riotously mispent his Portion in great want, and he out of his free Bounty should proffer him a Sum of Money sufficient to supply all his Wants, discharge all his Debts,

Debts, free him from all fear of Arrestments, and enrich him for ever in this World, provided he will but come to him, and put forth his hand to receive this Treasure, he shall have it ; if he will not, he will give it to those that will : Will any say that this was no free act of Love, because it had such Conditions propounded with it ? or if any one should refuse so kind an Offer, tho upon such terms as these, and will not come to him, nor put forth his hand to receive any of his Gold or Silver, but will rather pine away or rot in a Goal, unless he will force it into his Pocket whether he will or no ; would not all People look upon this as the greatest folly and imprudence in the World ? What, be loaded with Bags of Gold and Silver, and discharged from all Wants and Fears, and yet not so much as reach out the hand to receive them ? Well, suppose he should put forth his hand to receive this Treasure, is it the act of receiving the Money, or the Money received that enricheth him ? surely tho his putting forth his hand was a means, yet it was the Money received that enriched him, and he had cause for ever to be thankful to him, and admire his Love, and Bounty, and free Gift ; here would be no cause for such a poor Wretch to pride up himself, as if by his own power and towardliness he had merited

merited such Grace and Favour, but rather the contrary : so in spirituals. O here will be enough for Souls to admire, and that to Eternity, the signal Acts of God's free Grace and Favour, in that he has provided such effectual Means, and afforded them so powerful Aids and Assistances, in order to make them holy, and to bring their Wills into a compliance with his own. And I desire you to consider whether it will not be an aggravation to the damned to think, that they might have been happy as well as others, but that they wilfully refused Grace and Mercy when it was tendered to them.

1. Now if Conversion is to be wrought only by the irresistible and unfrustrable Power of Grace ; why is it said that some resisted the Holy Ghost, and made void the Counsel of God against themselves, and would not hear, come, nor obey his Voice, but closed their Ears, and hardened their Hearts ? as may be seen *Acts* 7. 51. *Luke* 7. 30. *Acts* 13. 46. & 7. 39. *Prov.* 1. 24, 25. *Zac.* 7. 11, 12, 13. *Jer.* 5. 7. and of others, that they heard the word readily, and received it chearfully, and obeyed it from the heart, as *Acts* 2. 41. & 13. 47. & 6. 7. & 17. 11. *Rom.* 6. 17. Now how can any of these be attributed to those who either can no ways believe and obey, it being wholly above their power ; or could not

not but believe and obey by the force of Grace no ways resistible?

2. But again, if God by a strong hand of irresistibile Grace works conversion in all, then all the Exhortations, Threatnings, and Promises, made unto Sinners in order to their repentance and believing are made in vain, yea bootless and ridiculous. "The
 " Divine Decree doth not impose any real
 " and fatal necessity on any, in respect of
 " their eternal safety or ruin; for the
 " Voice of Reason must needs proclaim
 " those Laws and Constitutions unjust,
 " which plainly forbid and prohibit that
 " which a Man cannot possibly assume or
 " avoid, nor can no more be changed by
 " our most earnest endeavours, than we
 " can stay the course of the Heavens, or
 " fly in the Air. *Mr. Hockins on God's De-*
cree, p. 122.

3. If we have not a sufficiency of Means vouchsafed by the Lord to repent, believe, and obey him, then doth the Lord deal more severely with Men under the Covenant of Grace, than under the Covenant of Works; now I say, I suppose you will not deny, but that the Lord endued *Adam* with sufficient Means for the performance of that Covenant, and so to obtain the Reward of that Covenant; but now if the Lord should under the Covenant of Grace require of Persons a ready submission to his
 holy

holy commands, and yet pass a Decree that they should not move one step forward in the way of Obedience, and wholly deny his Grace to them ; doth he not deal more severely with most of *Adams* off-spring under the Covenant of Grace by Christ, than under the Covenant of Works in *Adam*, requiring only possible things in the first, and impossible things in the latter ? And saith *Hockins* on God's Decree, pag. 189.

“ If a Master should be so severe to require
 “ as much work of his Servant when his
 “ hands are fast tied, as when he is at li-
 “ berty ; this would argue an unheard of
 “ Cruelty, joyned with the greatest Severi-
 “ ty.

4. Nay if Persons be not enabled by Grace to repent and believe the Gospel, they are thereby laid under an absolute necessity of despising it, thereby making themselves more the Children of Wrath and Death than before, *Heb. 2. 3. How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation?* clearly implying, that if Men by means of the Gospel, and the Grace offered to them therein, be not brought to repentance, and forsaking of Sin, those Sins which they commit under the Gospel, will turn to a more dreadful account to them : so that it is clear, that in case Men be not through Grace inabled to repent and believe the Gospel, they are in a worse condition under the

Cove-

Covenant of Grace, than they could have been were there no such Covenant made or tendered to them : nay, and by this, Persons sin by necessity ; this is to make God the Author of all the Unbelief and Sin in the World.

Mar. All we say is, that he never purposed to bestow that Grace upon them who perish, which of his good pleasure he purposed to bestow upon others, but to leave them to their Sins, and to Condemnation for them.

Philet. God is not the Author of Sin in any : for tho Sin will infallibly follow this Preterition, or non-Election, with a suspension of assisting Grace ; it follows not as an Effect from its true Cause, but as a Consequence upon its Antecedent. Hence he is no more the Author of Sin, than the Sun is of the Darkness which follows after its departure ; for this Preterition respects Man lying in the corrupt Mass, and God owes nothing to him but Justice ; Grace comes down from Heaven, but Sin and Iniquity grows at home in the Sinner's own Heart : neither was God any ways obliged to give restituent Grace to fallen Man, God may do what he will with his own ; may not the Supreme Lord deny a free Benefit, without being the Author of Sin ? God indeed permitteth it, but he doth not work it.

Philad. I shall not trouble my self about the distinction of God's Will into Antecedent and Consequent, (being made use of more to shew Scholarship than to Edification) yet it is likely it may be found in sundry places of Holy writ : for Grace, and the means of Salvation, are always in the first place vouchsafed unto Men before Salvation or Condemnation is actually conferred or inflicted upon any. God's Antecedent Will is, that every Man should repent, that they may not perish ; it is his consequent Will that every one shall perish that will not repent : yet is the Antecedent and consequent Will or Intention of the Lord both equally Eternal, equally Honourable and worthy of him.

But now what you hold in this case is not so, it being contrary to right Reason, and the tenour of God's Word ; and notwithstanding your distinction, God must become the proper and direct cause of Sin ; for Sin and Disobedience must unavoidably follow God's detaining Grace necessary for the avoiding of Sin, as the Effect doth its Cause. Now if God withhold Grace needful for the avoiding of Sin, and knowing infallibly what will follow upon it, must needs be the true moral Cause of Sin, for the withdrawing of Divine Grace you hold is the Antecedent, then Sin and Impiety must needs be the Consequent : as the Sun by
with-

withdrawing its Light, Darkness consequently follows; so if God be the chief Cause of that which is the Cause of the Reprobates Sin (which you do not deny) he thereby becomes the true and proper cause of their Sin, as you have it in *God's Love to Mankind*, p. 115, 116. " That which
 " withholdeth a thing, which being present
 " would hinder an Event, is the Cause of
 " that Event: As for Example, He that
 " cutteth a string in which a Stone hangs,
 " is the cause of the falling of that Stone;
 " and he that withdraweth a Pillar which
 " being put to, would uphold a House, is
 " the true cause, in Mens account, of the
 " falling of that House: and so if God
 " withholdeth from Reprobates that Power
 " which being granted them might keep
 " them from falling into Sin, he doth thereby
 " become a true moral cause of their Sins:
 " in whose Power it is that a thing be not
 " done, to him it is imputed when it is
 " done, saith *Tertullian*.

Yea, and by this, Sin, if it was Sin, could not become worthy of Eternal Punishment; for certainly God will not inflict Punishment upon Man for that which he himself was Author of, and which Man could not possibly avoid, being necessitated thereunto by a fatal Decree. I do grant you, God owes nothing to any Man, I also grant you that Grace comes down from Heaven; *Jam. i. 17.*

and that Sin and Iniquity grows at home in the Sinners own Heart ; yea, the best of Men are exceeding prone to Sin by the pravity of their Natures, yet none are compelled to Sin from any withdrawings of Divine Grace, unless first abused ; neither doth the Lord deny his Grace to any, but to those who too often and presumptuously abuse it ; neither can you prove in God's Revealed Will, that he hath either antecedently or consequently passed any Decree upon any Man personally considered, there by excluding him from Salvation, before he voluntarily excludes himself by such sinful miscarriages, which render him utterly incapable thereof.

But to return to what we were upon ;
And,

5. If Persons be not by Grace put in a capacity to believe and obey the Lord, they thereby become excusable if they do not obey ; because the Plea of insufficiency, or want of Power to believe, is an excuse possible : but surely the Means and Power which through Grace the Lord hath vouchsafed to Men, will leave them without excuse, if they prove wicked and unbelievers ; they will have nothing to plead for themselves when they come to stand before the Tribunal Seat of Christ, but will be as speechless as the Guest was without a Wedding Garment : for if the Heathens be
with-

without excuse, in that they did not glorify the Lord by the means vouchsafed to them, how inexcusable shall all those be, that under greater Mens and Light shall prove wicked and ungodly? which could not be if the Lord had not granted a power to do better. And I desire you to consider whether you believe any Man shall be condemned for not doing of that which was impossible for him to do,

6. If such as die in their Sins through unbelief have not through Grace a sufficient power to repent and believe in order to their Salvation, then doth God in his most earnest inviting them to believe, rather insult over them in their weakness and misery, than intend any real benefit to them; which to conceive, is most unworthy of him, and not far from blasphemy: for doth not this your Opinion represent God full of guile?

1. In his passionate Wilhes, *Deut.* 5. 29. *Psal.* 81. 11. *Isa.* 48. 18. *Jer.* 44. 4.

2. In his mournful Expostulations, *Isa.* 5. 3. *Jer.* 2. *Ezek.* 33. 11.

3. In his commiseration of poor Sinners, *Hos.* 11. 18. and *O Jerusalem, &c.* *Mat.* 23.

Now thus to profess Love to Man, and be earnest with him to do that for his safety, which he knows to be impossible for him to do, looks too much like Guile disguised under a Mask of Candor and Goodness,

which is far from him to be guilty of.

And pray you to what end are all his Promises in Scriptures; are they not to spur us on to a holy and pious Life? but how vain are they, when they are upon condition of our repentance, believing and obeying the Lord, which is as possible to perform without Grace, as to eat up a Rock? Now if God makes a promise to give us Heaven on condition we do believe, and yet never gives us a Christ to believe in, nor power to believe, these are Promises equal to a bare denial: but far be it from the most High, that any of his Promises should be either false or fraudulent; his Promises are in Christ *Tea, and Amen*; they are as unchangeable as his being, they are not fair to look on (like the Apples of *Sodom*) but afterwards die in a mere nothing of performance.

And to conclude this Point, I must needs tell you that I look upon all those no better than ungrateful Blasphemers and Liers, that say God hath required us to perform those things which he hath not given us abilitys whereby we may cooperate with him in doing those things which he hath enjoined us to do, and in avoiding those things he hath forbidden, and yet it shall be our Condemnation. *Calvin* himself acknowledgeth, that Man's refusing God's Grace, evidently presupposes there is in every Man a real power to imbrace it.

Philet. But do you hold that God gives special discriminating Grace to all? you ought to make a distinction between God's Grace, for there is common Grace and special Grace; his common Grace is given to the whole Universe, but his special Grace only to the Elect.

Philad. I believe God gives not his Grace to all alike, but to some more, and to others less, according to the good pleasure of his Will; yet he is wanting to none but such as are wanting to themselves: *O Israel, thy destruction is of thy self*, Hosea 13. 9. Man's destruction is of himself, for not faithfully doing of that which God by his Grace hath enabled him to perform: But, pray what is this you call *common Grace*, and what *discriminating Grace*?

Philet. Common Grace is the single Talent of Reason and Understanding, with the good things of this Life which all Men enjoy; and those that live under or within the sound of the Gospel call, are under the external Offers of Grace (we are not under the Law but under Grace, that is, the Gospel) yea and may from thence receive common Grace, *viz.* Illumination, Conviction, legal Humiliation, &c.

But special Grace is an inward Work wrought in the Hearts of the Elect by the irresistible Power of the Spirit.

Philad. Pray tell me one thing, For what End and Use is God's Grace given to any, let it be never so small? was it given to do Evil?

Philet. No.

Philad. What then, to do nothing withal?

Philet. No, Men that receive it are not to be idle with it.

Philad. Then doubtless it was to honour and glorify the Lord with it here on Earth, and through Christ is sufficient to glorify him in Heaven, if he be a faithful improver of it.

But it doth appear, that those that have received one Talent, have receiv'd a small measure of Grace; this you will not call by the name of Special Grace: what, is not the least measure of Grace which we enjoy from God, a special Favour? and is not Grace, as it comes from God, whether great or small, the same in Nature? and will not the least measure of Grace, faithfully improved through Christ, lead us to Heaven, and the non-improvement of it lay the receiver under unpardonable guilt? for we shall be accountable to God for what he gives, and no more. God did not require the improvement of two Talents of him that had received but one; neither did the Lord take away the one Talent from him that had it, till he hid it, and would not improve it.

Philet.

Philet. Why, he that had received the one Talent receiv'd but common Grace ; and one reason he could not make that one Talent two, was, because he had not special Grace to inable him to improve it : so tho he might have received so much as to leave him without excuse, yet it was not sufficient for Salvation.

Philad. But it was not sufficient to leave him without excuse, if not sufficient to effect that which the Lord expected from him ; and still Mens not believing or obeying the Lord, must be laid at his door ; as if God would damn Persons for not improving their Talent, that never had sufficient Means or Power to do it. You in effect say that God requires Persons to believe and obey him, yet he hath not enabled them so to do ; is not this plainly to say, God exacts more of his Creatures than they are able to do ? God grant you repentance for these your hard sayings : Surely if he that had received the one Talent, had not thereby received power and opportunity sufficient to improve it according to the Lord's Will, it would not have been so provoking in the sight of the Lord, as to cause him to pass so heavy a Doom upon him, as to be bound hand and foot, and cast into utter Darkness. This is not like the Righteousness and Equity of God's Proceedings with wicked
and

and ungodly Men, to bring the Vengeance of Eternal Fire upon the Heads of those who did not do that which was impossible for them to do : surely we shall be accountable to the Lord for no more than what we receive from him, according to that principle of Equity attested by our Saviour, *Luke 12. 48. for unto whom much is given, of him much shall be required ;* and then by the rule of contraries, unto whom but little is given, but little shall be required. He that hath one Talent, must be only accountable for that ; and *he that is faithful in a little, shall be ruler over much.* And seeing you pretend very high to Grace above others, know this, God expects suitable returns ; he that improves his one Talent well, shall be rewarded with a *well done good and faithful Servant* ; when thou with all thy Light and Talents, if not improved according to the Will of the Doner thereof, shall receive the greater condemnation ; and then instead of free Love, thou wilt meet with just Wrath, therefore fear and tremble lest gracious Favour be abused.

But come, *Philetus*, let us leave this ; I believe you cannot make it out, how the Gospel should be preached to those that God hath not given a Christ to believe in, nor power to believe : You know it was the Gospel Ministers Work, and the first thing they were to do, was to say, *Peace*

be to this House, Luke 10. 5. But what Peace or Glad-tydings could they bring or speak to those where God intended none?

Philet. But it is not known whom the Lord hath chosen to Life, and therefore the Word of Life is to be preached to all, tho only those will receive it whose Hearts the Lord opens by his mighty Power; so that our Ministers preach the general Love of God as much as you do.

Philad. I know it, they are forced so to do, or to preach themselves out of doors; very few being so true to their Opinion as one I lately heard of, that after he had been exhorting his Hearers a great while to Dutys, at last told them, That *he did not know whether Christ died for one Soul amongst them.* And I believe very few ever heard any of your way that have managed any Theme, but are necessitated to assert and own it, otherwise such their Discourse would be as inconsistent in it self, as it is far from Truth; tho many in their Sermons speak much in their Exhortations to Holiness; and when they take a Text of Scripture from thence, labour to prove their Notions a Truth: while they raise their Doctrin, and give Reasons, they seemingly go on fairly, till they come to the Applicatory part, where they knock all to pieces.

Mar. 'Tis true, many or most are to blame upon that account; I have plainly told them of that my self, that in private they have been one with me, but in public quite other Men, as much for the general Point as you are.

Philad. Tho they are professed Enemies to general Redemption, yet it is of that use and necessity, that they are forc'd to argue many things upon that account; neither can they be without the service of it in the carrying on many of their Affairs; yea, and many times dissemble it, 'tis so odious in most Christians Eyes. If we look within the Confines of our own Nation, very few of the Church of *England* but own and believe Christ died for all; yea, I am informed, that there are hardly six of your Opinion in both Universities. The Quakers generally, not one that I hear of, but look upon it unworthy the belief of a Christian: Not to mention any others, you your selves are greatly divided about it, and the most zealous of those that hold it, dare not preach what they believe to the People, lest instead of People (which you say are as passive in Conversion as the Stones in the Walls) they should have none but Stones to preach to.

Mar. Surely if Christ died for all, with an intent to save all, then all would be saved, and how comes it to pass that any miss it?

it? Universal Redemption must needs procure universal Salvation; Christ's Blood must needs effect that for which it was shed.

Philad. That Persons miss Salvation, is not for want of a Jesus, nor for want of the free tenders of Grace, nor for want of an Advocate; none can charge their eternal ruin upon the Lord, *Hosea* 13. 9. but 'tis their not believing on the only begotten Son of God, their rejecting Light, and loving Darkness, taking pleasure in Unrighteousness, and because they refuse to come at Christ's Call, and will not open when he knocks, nor take his Counsel, nor mind those things that make for their Everlasting Peace, but abuse the Lord's patience waiting upon and striving with them, and so come at last to perish through their own vile, stubborn, and wilful Obstinacy, *Prov.* 1. 24, to 32. *2 Pet.* 2. 1, 2. *2 Theff.* 2. 10, 11, 12. God doth not necessitate any to be wicked, neither doth he withdraw Grace necessary, unless first abused, *1 Chron.* 28. 9. The Lord is with you while you are with him, &c. *2 Chron.* 24. 20. There is no let in God that all Men may believe and be saved. Nay, what could God have done more for Man, that he hath not done? *Isa.* 5. 4. that is, what God in his Wisdom thought meet to do, and which was most agreeable to those Properties and Principles of Reason and Under-

Understanding placed in Man. For,

1. God hath placed in Man an inward Witness, to wit, Conscience, which if it be hearkned unto, will convince of Sin, and lead to Duty.

And not only so, but hath discovered by his Word to Men the damning Nature of Sin, and hath plainly forewarned Persons, that if they will go on in a way of Sin and Disobedience, they are like to suffer the Vengeance of Eternal Fire, hereby to deter them from Evil.

And hath also made many most gracious Promises to those that are faithful and obedient to him, of infinite Glory, incomprehensible Rewards, with the injoyment of the infinite, good, and gracious God himself in Heaven to Eternity.

And that Man might escape Eternal Wrath, and obtain Life and Glory; God that foresaw Man's Fall, did from the beginning purpose to provide a way to make Man happy; and therefore in infinite Wisdom, and tender Mercy, contrived the saving lost Man, by sending into the World, and delivering up unto Death his only Son, that so all the Enmity that was between God and poor sinful Man might be renewed, and Man through him might have peace with God, *Ephes. 2. 14, 15. Rom. 5. 1.* And also the Lord stands engaged by Promise to justify and save Sinners if they believe

believe in his Son, and hath promised the assistance of his Infinite Spirit, to all those that by true Faith and Love seek it of him, *Luke 11.* whereby Persons may be able to repent and believe, and able to oppose Sin, and advance forward in the Path of Righteousness, and persevere therein to the end. Now, what could God do more than this? So that if any perish, their destruction is of themselves, *Jonah 4.*

Dr. *Holms*, upon *John 6. 37.* pag. 17. speaking of God's freely pardoning Sinners, and of the Bridegroom and Bride (the Church) and the Spirit, all calling to Sinners to come, *Rev. 22. 17.* saith, " Therefore why, O ye Sons of Men, " stand you still in a damnable, mistaken, " doubting condition, so as not to come " to Christ? Why will you die, you need " not perish unless you will perish; no " Reason in Christ's Will, but in your " own Will. You never improved the " least Gift to go forward towards Christ, " but he prospered it more: What would " you have more than a Christ suffering, " a Christ offering, a Christ intreating " that you may come? And in *pag. 18.* having repeated the same words, saith, " You have a Christ that hath suffered for " you, a God that hath sent him to you, a " God that invites you to him; and if you " come to him, you shall not be disap- " appointed;

“ pointed ; the Text saith, *He that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* All which so fully and freely declares the Mind of God and Christ to poor Sinners, that nothing can be said against it, as *Isa. 5. 4. Hosea 6. 4.* Now, O Sinner, look about thee, God acquits himself; therefore the fault must lie upon thee, if thou dost not improve what thou hast: tho God’s Will doth not depend upon Man’s Will, yet God will be tied to his own Ingagement, and do what he hath said.

Philet. Come, forbear any farther discourse on this Point; we all hold that Man’s destruction is of himself, there is no damning to misery without relation to sin.

Philad. Well, we will wholly break off at this time, only give me leave to ask you, and your Friend *Martha*, this Question, *viz.* What is the reason you go about to perswade your selves, and others, that God is so severe with the greatest part of Mankind, as to leave them in the Fall, without giving his Son to die for them, but leaving them to perish? is it to make your own Salvation doubtful? for if Christ died for scarce one in a thousand, what grounds have you to believe Christ died for you, or that you were elected and chosen to Life?

Philet. I do not question but I was beloved of God, and chosen in Christ,
before

before the Foundation of the World.

Philad. I suppose that you must needs have a high Opinion of your self, that you are one of the Darlings of Heaven, one beyond all possibility of miscarrying, one that shall never behold the angry Countenance of the Almighty ; otherwise I believe you would be glad to hear the joyful Tidings of Peace and Reconciliation with God through Jesus Christ : for tho you represent God at so dreadful a rate towards others, yet you would not have him appear in such Wrath and Fury to your self ; nay, your Doctrine would not be so readily imbraced by so many, if they thought they themselves were of that number, that God had by an absolute Decree of Reprobation shut under Wrath, from all possibility of obtaining Life and Salvation. And should the Lord awaken your Conscience under a sense of the dread and horror of your being absolutely rejected from Grace and Glory, from having any saving benefit by the Death of Christ, this might so amaze you, that all Means and Arguments used to comfort you, might be of no value ; your Opinion walks Antipodes to all words of comfort.

What would it avail you then at such a time to tell you of God's great Love to his Elect, and that he had such a Love for some few of the degenerate Sons of *Adam*, that

rather than they should perish, he would give his Son a Ransom for them, and with him give them Faith and Repentance, and by a strong hand of irresistible Grace carry them through this World to Glory; but that far the greater number are left of the Lord to die and perish, for the manifestation of his Justice and Displeasure against Sin? Would this fasten any comfort upon you, when you behold the Lord's angry Countenance, only speaking Blood and Ruin to you? Come, *Philetus*, this hath been so dreadful to many, that they have run some to the Sword, and others to the Halter. Now seeing that you make the number of the Elect so small, as not one in a hundred, or one in a thousand; how can you have any comfortable assurance that you are one of those that Christ died for, unless you prove it by his dying for all, and so consequently for you, including a part in the whole.

Philet. What rotten stuff have we here, at what a pitiful rate do you talk! would you have me believe Christ died for me, because he died for the whole World? if I had no other assurance and hopes for Heaven than this, I should be in a miserable state; I enjoy saving Grace, there is an inward Work of God upon my Heart, and I am really brought over to Christ; this is a better proof that I am not one of those that
are

are left in the Fall to perish, but one of those Christ died for.

Philad. I own that there are Marks and Signs which may be sufficient proof of a Person's Regeneration, and may be a good Mark of Election, and a sound Evidence for Heaven, *Rom. 8. 16. the Spirit witnessing with our Spirits.* But now in this weighty concern of our Souls and Salvation, nothing ought to be believed by any, but what they have grounds to believe from the Word of God, and from that inward Witness, which if true, never contradicts, but is always futable and agreeable to the Word. Now since by your Doctrine the Death of Christ did not extend to one of a thousand, how is it possible for you to know that Christ died for you, unless it be revealed in the Word of God, since he that Christ did or did not die for, must be built upon the Testimony of the Lord? therefore, I say, shew me (if you can) a proof from the Scripture, that Christ died for you; or if you cannot do that, shew me that Man now living in the World for whom Christ did not die:

Philet. I cannot shew you my Name written in the Scriptures, nor no place that saith that he died for *I. S.* but if I can prove my self a Believer, I can prove that I am no Reprobate, but an Elect Person, and consequently one that Christ died for,

for believing is an infallible Fruit of Election.

Philad. But what if you mistake, and think you have true Faith when you have not; there is a Faith which is only fancy, nay mere presumption, a Faith besides the Word of God: 'tis easy for Men to deceive themselves and others with false Appearances and deceivable Marks in this case, since all saving Graces in the Saints have their Counterfeits in Hypocrites, yea oftner furnished and set forth with more gaudy paint in Hypocrites than real Christians; the Devil can shew himself to be an Angel of Light. But come to your Marks of Election, Are you the Child of believing Parents? this is not sufficient to prove you in the Love and Favour of God; for so was *Cain*, *Ishmael*, and *Esau*, yet you say they were reprobated. Have you been baptized, and so initiated into the visible Church of Christ? so have many thousands, who by their Conversation shew themselves to be of the Synagogue of Satan.

Have you done Miracles? so did *Jannes* and *Jambres*, yet they were Cheats.

Do you outwardly partake of the Lord's Table? so do many that have no part in him, as *Judas*.

Do you preach the Word to others, prophesy in Christ's Name? so may many to whom Christ will say, *Depart you cursed,*
and

and while they preach Salvation to others; miss it themselves.

Philet. These are outward Marks which may very well stand with Hypocrisy; mine is a supernatural, spiritual, and inward Work, the saving Effect of the sanctifying Spirit of God. What say you to Faith, is not that a Fruit of the Spirit?

Philad. Yea, true justifying Faith is; but what would you prove that Christ died for you, because you are a Believer?

Philet. No, Christ did not die for me, and elect me, because I believe; but because God elected me, and gave his Son to die for me, therefore I believe; I being to prove that God loved me, and gave his Son to die for me, and that Faith is a Fruit of God's electing Love.

Philad. But what if your Faith be the Faith of the Hypocrite, which will perish? *Simon Magus*, Acts 8. 13. believed the Doctrine preached by *Philip*, and professed his Faith publickly, by being baptized in Water according to our Lord's Command, and yet in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity; for his heart was not right in the sight of God. And saith *Duveil* upon this place, "Many that are not of a right heart
" in the sight of God, may oftentimes excel in the Gift of the Spirit, for neither
" did the perverseness and Hypocrisy of
" *Judas* the Traitor hinder him to excel

“ in the Gifts of the Spirit ; neither had the
 “ Gifts of the Spirit been so corrupted,
 “ 1 Cor. 14. if their hearts had been sin-
 “ cere, *Luke 8. 13. These are they which for*
 “ *a time believe*, and in time of temptation
 “ fall a way.

But we are fallen into an Age, that the
 practick part of Christianity is almost de-
 stroy'd by the speculative part : As if the
 truth of our Faith did not stand with a
 course of holiness and strict walking with
 God. And, as Dr. *Burnet* saith in his Pre-
 face to the *Life of God in the Soul of Man*,
 “ That in more antient times those that
 “ wrote Apologies for the Christian Religi-
 “ on did appeal to the Lives of the Christi-
 “ ans to prove their Doctrine holy ; but
 “ alas, when we write Apologies, we must
 “ appeal from the Life to the Rule and
 “ Precepts of Faith, which ought not to
 “ be.

Philet. But it hath wrought Reformation
 of Life in me.

Philad. Hypocrites have been famous for
 moral virtues ; yea, many that you will not
 own for Christians in many things, excel
 you at this day ; Remember the Scribes and
 Pharisees, read 2 *Pet.* 2. 20, 21, 22. where
 you may see, that some that shall not escape
 the damnation of Hell, may notwithstanding
 escape the pollutions of the World, and
 that through the knowledg of the Son of
 God,

Philet. But I see such Excellencies in Christ, that I have longings of Heart after more intimate acquaintance with him.

Philad. Strong desires may Hypocrites have after Christ, and Heavenly things, *John 6. 34. Mat. 25. 8. Numb. 23. 10.*

Philet. But the Lord hath given me through the Spirit, a foretast of Heaven it self in the first-Fruits of it.

Philad. May not this be found in Apostates also, *Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6*? So tho I do not charge you to be a Hypocrite, to pretend to what you do not enjoy, yet this I say, since every saving Grace in the true Christian hath its counterfeite in others, this will not be sufficient to prove Christ died for you, but must find better grounds for it than such marks, which are as proper for Hypocrites as true Believers: you may indeed have an opinion that Christ died for you; but where are your grounds, seeing the certain knowledg whom Christ died for, must not be built upon any good which we may suppose in us, but upon the Word of the Lord: so till it be proved, beyond all Objection, that Christ died for you, and hath not decreed to leave you in the Fall, &c. all comfortable assurance of your Eternal State will be cut off, if ever you should fall under the dread and horror of it; and methinks, could I be got to believe that

that Christ died but for a few, and no Man could prove Christ died for him but by such Marks as you talk of, I am so conscious to the failings and deceitfulness of my own heart, that I should despair of Mercy : but here's my support, that God would have all Men to be saved, hath redeemed all, calleth all to Repentance and believing in him, with gracious promises of Life and Salvation ; and now seeing God loveth all Men, and desireth their eternal good, therefore mine as well as others, if I by true Faith apply that (through the assistance of the Spirit) to my self, which is offered in general to all.

And how doth the certain knowledg of this tend to beget honourable thoughts of God, and fill our Hearts with precious indearedness to Christ ? yea, soften our Hearts when we sin against such Mercy and Grace, yea, make us look upon him whom we have pierced, *Zach. 12.* Yea and if at any time poor Souls come to be bowed down under the weight of Sin, and knows not how to be delivered from their fears and dangers, but are ready with the Church, *Lam. 3. 18.* to sit down and say, *My hope is perished from the Lord :* Now at such a time as this, when the Love of God in Jesus Christ is set home upon the Heart, O what work will this make upon such a one ! O the dear Love that this begets in a sincere Soul

Soul for Christ ! and O, methinks what a comfort is it to Gospel-Ministers that in their declarations of the Gospel they can offer it to all, and labour with Souls to bring them over to the Lord ! But how faint and coolly must other Ministers be in tendering of Christ to Sinners ; or how can your Ministers tender Christ to their hearers, or be earnest with them to imbrace Christ, or believe in him, when they do not know whether Christ died for one of them ?

So notwithstanding all you have said to prove your Title for Heaven, and to be one of those that Christ died for, yet since you place Salvation upon the absolute Decree of God, and that Decree is kept secret to you, you cannot say of your self you are one of those that Christ died for, and that you shall go to Heaven because you at present believe ; no more than you can say of any wicked Man in the World, that he is one of those that God hath left in the Fall, without a Saviour, since he that is now wicked may be called and saved ; *such were some of you*, 1 Cor. 6. and you may make shipwreck of Faith and a good Conscience, fall from your first Love, and so miss Heaven.

Philet. I see you are for falling away from Grace.

Philad. No, I am not, I am against falling away.

Philet.

Philet. Yea, but you hold that a true Believer, a Child of God, and in a state of Grace, may so far fall away as to miss Heaven; you are not able to prove by any Example in the Scripture, where any true Believer hath fallen from Grace.

Philad. Suppose I cannot prove by any Example in Scripture, that any true Believer hath fallen; doth it therefore follow, that no true Believer can possibly fall? suppose no true Believers ever yet fell away, yet 'tis possible they may.

Philet. How prove you that?

Philad. From 2 *Pet.* 2. 20. If those that have clean escaped the pollution of the World, and that thro the knowledg, &c. may fall away, then other Believers may.

Philet. That is not the description of a true Believer.

Philad. How any one can escape the Pollutions of the World, &c. and yet not be a Believer, I know not.

Philet. 'Tis meant of gross Pollutions of the World, and so a Man may be free from the gross pollutions of this World in the midst of inward Impurities and Hypocrisies; they were free from the gross acts of Sin, so that they did not come into the view of the World.

Philad. That is as much as to say, their escaping was not real, they had but seemingly escaped the pollutions of the World; they

they were at best but Hypocrites, how then could the latter end of such be worse than their beginning? Nay, what if they had put off their guise of Religion wherewith they deceive the World, and appeared like themselves in their swinish nature, could that make their end worse than before, seeing Hypocrites are like to meet with the greatest condemnation? *Mat. 24. 51.* But how those can be said to be Hypocrites, that have clean escaped the Pollution of the World, thro the knowledg of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, I cannot see, unless Hypocrisy be no Pollution; and if it be, then were they no Hypocrites, or else they had not clean escaped the pollution of the World, nor from them that live in Error, *ver. 18.* which he affirms. But we must hasten to put an end to this days Discourse. Now consider *Heb. 6. 6.* where the Author speaks of the impossibility of renewing some by repentance in case they fall away: which plainly supposeth there is, or may be such a thing incident to Man; and it is very evident from this Scripture, that the Author admonisheth those whom he judged true and sound Believers, for he here speaketh not of ordinary and common, but of special and excellent Grace; and yet these are under a possibility of falling away for ever: for doth not the Author give them to understand, that not-

with-

withstanding they were most eminent Saints and Believers; yet through carelessness and carnal Security, they might make Shipwrack of their Souls, and perish ?

Philet. What, are these Characters applicable to none but true Believers ?

Philad. If there be any Persons under Heaven that may be judged true Believers, they are such as these mentioned; and if you can, shew me any that had all these Gifts, and yet were destitute of true Grace.

Philet. I cannot give you a particular Instance of all these meeting together in one Person that was not a Believer : But can you prove that these Qualifications are applicable to none but true Believers ?

Philad. If they be applicable to any others, give me an Instance where; for I know of none from whence we have cause to believe that true Believers may possibly apostatize so far, as to be under an impossibility of being renewed again by Repentance, and so perish. Again, in 1 Cor. 9. 27. you may see that Holy Paul, after his Conversion to Christ, took great care and pains to beat down his Body, &c. which was needless in him, if he were under no possibility of falling.

Again, that true Believers are under a possibility of falling, appears a truth, because

cause the Lord by his Holy Spirit in his Prophets and Apostles doth, by many Exhortations, Promises, and Threatnings, labour to prevent apostatizing in them, and to cause them to persevere.

But if your Doctrine be true, that there is an utter impossibility of a final falling away; what favour of Wisdom or Sense is there in admonishing Persons against that which there is no possibility of ever coming to pass; but that God will by an irresistible hand of Grace and Power, preserve them in a state of Grace and Favour, how desperately careless or wicked soever they shall be? yea, tho they fall into ten thousand abominable Sins, yet they shall be brought to repentance before they die: doth not this make all Exhortations, Threatnings and Promises, unnecessary? For if Men be assured they shall never perish, pray tell me why they should labour to prevent their perishing?

Moderat. But you must understand that the Means and the End are coupled together, and that God that hath appointed the End, hath appointed the Means to attain the End; and God makes use of our own Endeavours as the Means to attain Heaven, and prevent our Apostacy; as in the case of *Noah*, tho he was assured, and that from God himself, that he should not perish by the Water, yet he was to make
the

the Ark : here you see that tho he knew God would save him, yet he used the means, or else he knew he should not be saved ; he did not say to himself, God hath bound himself by Covenant to save me ; now if I make not the Ark, his Word is his Word, and he will stand to it ; tho I be false, yet he will be true ; tho I do not as I should, yet he will do as he hath promised, and therefore I'll spare my labour : but you see *Noah* is of another mind, he will not sever God's Word from the Means ; he judged that if he made not the Ark, he was to look for no deliverance ; this was his Divinity. So in *Hezekiah's* Case, tho God had promised to add fifteen years to his Life, yet he was to use the means God had appointed to sustain Life, as Meat, Drink, Rest, &c. yea, tho the Lord had absolutely promised that he would add fifteen years to his Life, yet there was to be a Plaister of Figs applied to his Sore in order to his recovery. So likewise in that of *Paul*, Acts 27. 22. compared with 31. tho the Lord had promised there should be no loss of any Man's Life, yet afterwards *Paul* said to the Centurion, and the Souldiers, *Except these* (to wit, the Mariners, by whose skill the Ship should be brought nearer to Land for their safety) *abide in the Ship, ye cannot be safe.* So tho Christ had assured his Disciples that they should never perish,
and

and none should pluck them out of his Father's Hands ; yet he bid them *watch and pray, lest they fall into temptation.*

Philad. I perceive you look upon these Promises, tho absolutely express'd, yet conditionally intended ; so that none of all these should perish, provided they should obey wholesom Advice, and use all Means that in them lay for their preservation ; now do you believe this is true in Spirituals ?

Moderat. Yea, doubtless.

Philad. I say so too ; and dare be bold to assure, from the Word and Promise of that God that cannot lie, that not one true Believer shall ever perish who faithfully uses the means God hath prescribed, in order to his standing. And if *Philetus* be of this mind, we shall soon agree : What say you *Philetus* ?

Philet. I believe, as God hath required his Children to use the means of Perseverance, so he hath decreed they shall all of them use it accordingly ; and that he will so overpower them by his Spirit, that it shall be beyond all possibility of miscar-rying.

Philad. Pray produce such a Decree if you can.

Philet. In *Jer* 31. 33 to 37. you have an absolute Promise of Perseverance made by the Lord to the Church of God.

Philad.

Philad. You cannot prove by this Text, that none can fall away : this Promise was made to the dispersed Nation of the *Jews*, whom the Lord in his anger had driven into all Countrys, and therefore had a respect as well to the Unbelievers as true Believers amongst them : Compare *Ezek.* 11. 17, 18. where is a Promise of the same import ; yet in *vers.* 21. those that walk after their detestable things, may bring ruin upon themselves.

Philet. *John* 10. 29. there you have the Omnipotent God ingaging himself to preserve the Saints or sheep of Christ, from either total or final Apostacy.

Philad. *John* 10. 27, 28. *My Sheep hear my Voice, and I know them, and they follow me ; and I give unto them Eternal Life, and they shall never perish, &c.* Now I believe that those that are the Sheep of Christ, which hearing his Voice, follow him perseveringly to the end, he will give unto them Eternal Life ; there's no danger of perishing so long as they remain the Sheep of Christ.

Philet. This cavil is cut off in the next Words ; *neither shall any pluck them out of my hands :* therefore neither Sin, the Devil, the World, nor Flesh, can by any Temptation draw the Sheep of Christ from their Faith.

Philad. How, who told you so ? *I give them Eternal Life ;* neither shall any be able

ble to pluck them out of Christ's hands; when once they are landed upon the Celestial *Canaan*; they may then say, Now Sin, Satan, and wicked World, do your worst. But if you would have it respect the Saints as to this Life, yet here is not the least shew of the great power of God ingaged for the compelling or necessitating of them to continue such to the end of their days, and that they cannot cease from following him; or any promise made to those that for the present hear his Voice and follow him: yet if they shall quit the Faith, and draw back from him, they shall never perish, how sinful and wicked soever they be. Neither is it to be conceived, as if Sin, Wickedness, Looseness, and Profaneness, could not unsaint Persons, or pluck them from under the Lord's protection, or separate them from the Love of God; but that Sin will separate between Men and their God, is evident from *Isa.* 49. 2. But this rather shews, That those that continue following of Christ, shall be safe under the protection and safeguard of the Lord, so as no Creature whatsoever shall be able to separate them from God.

Martha. As God the Father looks for nothing from Man to partake of Christ; so it is not Sin nor Evil that can debar any true Believer from a part in Christ. It is a desperate thing in any so much as to
 X serve

serve a Writ of Damnation upon a Believer, for in doing so they injure the Lord Jesus, overthrowing the fulness of his Grace.

Philad. That God hath made an assurance to any of injoying his Love and Favour, but upon condition of their Love and Loyalty to him, I suppose the Scripture is wholly silent; nay such assurance is not honourable for God to make, nor meet for a Creature to expect or desire: for who can imagine that an infinitely wise, and righteous God, should ever ingage himself to any People, to be their God, unless they be also willing to be his People, to love and live to him? or what ingenuous Soul, that truly loves God, doth desire to be pardoned, and protected, and delivered from eternal Misery, and injoy all the Blessings of his Child, and yet pay nothing of that love and reverence that is due to him for such Mercys?

And whereas you speak as if it were not Sin and Evil that can make him that was once a Believer less beloved of God, the Lord having once loved him, he cannot cease to love him; this I have answered before. But such Expressions as these cannot be short of Blasphemy, to put such a Saying as this in the Mouth of the Lord: Tho thou addest Drunkenness to Thirst; tho thou committest Whoredom, Adultery, Incest, Murder, and every ways cast my
Com-

Commandments behind thy back, yet shalt thou be precious in my Eyes, and my heart shall be towards thee in the greatest Love and dearest Affection for ever. And tho this may seem harsh, yet your opinion leads directly to such horrid conceits of God.

For if Christ be not given Covenant-wise, but the promise of Life is made absolutely, without any condition, or proviso at all of Persons Love and Loyalty to him, then it follows, that the obstinate and resolved Sinners, the loosest and most debauched Persons may as well lay claim to the Promise of Eternal Life, as the most faithful and virtuous in the World: and if you say 'tis not Absolute, it follows that it is Conditional, for the wit of Man cannot shew a Medium between these two.

Philet. We do not say that no Believers can fall into Sin; fall they may, fearfully, but not totally and finally.

Philad. Who ever said that the Elect, such that believe and persevere to the end, ever fell away finally? I know none that say any such thing: the Question is, Whether the Grace of God may not be so resisted, *Isa.* 5. 4. *Acts* 7. 51. *Mat.* 23. 37. as to cause the Lord to take away his Holy Spirit from them, and to suffer them to fall into a state of Perdition? I would know why our Saviour hath told us, that *from him*

that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he seemeth to have, if it be not for this reason, because he hath lavished out his Talent, and hath rejected the Power of doing well which was offered him : surely there is no better arguing than that Man can resist the Grace of God, because he doth ; and 'tis a wonder that such as you are, are not confuted by your own experience that Grace is resistible, unless you will deny your self to be of the number of the Elect.

Surely *David* had Grace to have done better than he did in the matter of *Uriah*; but he resisted it, and lay in his Sin a long time; which shews that the precious Vessels of Election may fall away from Grace (whether we take it for a gracious Life, or for the Love and Favour of God) for had he been taken away in his Sin without Repentance, he might have perished,

Philet. Ay, but *David* being an elected Person, tho he did fall into Sin, God almighty decreed that *David* should repent and return; neither could he die until he had repented.

Philad. By these words you seem to hold, that had *David* died before he had repented, he had perished; which he could not have done if he had not fallen from Grace.

Mar. The Apostle *John*, 1 *John* 3. 9. saith, *Whosoever is born of God, cannot com-*
mit

mit Sin, for his Seed remaineth in him ; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God: he that cannot sin, cannot fall, either totally or finally.

Philad. What, cannot sin at all ! what then saith the same Apostle, *That if we say we have no Sin, we deceive our selves*, Chap. 1. 8. And so *James* 3. 2. *In many things we offend all ;* we Apostles, that are born of God, which are regenerate, and have the Seed of God abiding in us as much as any, yet in many things all of us offend.

Mar. I do not say, commit no act of sin, but they sin not as wicked Men sin.

Philad. I believe the same, that Believers, considered as to that state they are in, cannot sin as wicked Men sin, (to wit) in making a customary trade of Sin but that they may sin with delight, yea with deliberation, yea plot, and cast Projects for the committing of Sin, as well as the Wicked ; witness *David*, 2 Sam. 11. But now the Question is, Whether they cannot cease to be Believers, and then sin as other Men sin ?

Mar. The Seed of God doth so remain in true Believers, that they cannot but continue such, yea they must remain Believers while the Seed of God remains in them, for that keeps them from sinning as wicked Men sin, or from finally falling ; neither can they do any thing to occasion the Seed

of God to be taken away from them.

Philad. This word *remain*, signifies a present abode, a present being in him ; it doth not shew a continuance of being : and so it is true, that those that are born of God, begotten by the immortal and incorruptible Seed, the Word of God, 1 *Pet.* 1. 23. *James* 1. 18. and made partakers of the Divine Nature, cannot sin as wicked Men sin, so long as the Seed remains ; but you are to prove that it cannot but remain, as *Mr. Ives* says in his *Dispute* with *Mr. Danson*.

Mar. The Seed is Grace by your own grant, and it is for the substance of it incorruptible, unperishable, 1 *Pet.* 1. 23. *John* 3. 9. & 17. 3. & 10. 28, 29. & 6. 54. 1 *John* 5. 13. *Peter's* Faith failed sadly as to the act, but the Seed remained, &c. and he was kept by the Power of God that he did not finally fall away.

Philad. 'Tis true, the Seed, or the Word of God, is in its own nature incorruptible, tho all the Men in the whole World should reject it : 'tis not called *incorruptible* because it cannot be forsaken, or taken from those in whom it hath a residence for the present ; but because whether it be taken away or forsaken by them or not, whether it be received or rejected, yet still it remains in it self incorruptible and unperishable. But you seem to lay the stress upon the word *remain*, to shew that true Believers cannot fall

fall away; now the same Apostle John supposeth that the same Seed or Word might not remain, by the word *if*, Chap. 2. 24. *If that which you have heard from the beginning, shall remain in you, &c. you also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father, &c. and so Chap. 2. 14. I have written to you young Men, because you are strong, and the Word of God abides in you; yet that this was subject to be lost, appears by ver. 28. where he exhorts the same little Children to abide in him, that they might not be ashamed at his coming: surely the Apostle would not admonish to that which it was impossible should fall out otherwise.*

So Christ promiseth that the Comforter should abide with his Disciples for ever, John 14. 6. Yet that doth not suppose that it was impossible for them to fall, for he tells them, Chap. 15. 2. *That every Branch in me (mind, in me) that bears not Fruit, he taketh away: And, vers. 10. If ye keep my Commandments, ye shall abide in my Love.* Christ never said to any of his Disciples, That the most abominable Practices you can commit, shall never lessen my Love to you; nor is it possible you should die in your Sins, in the midst of your Impieties; there is a Seed of Grace in you that shall keep you from final falling away.

'Tis true, so long as a Man is a true Believer, the Seed remains; but when once a

Man departs from that state, then the Seed doth not abide in him ; so that the word *remain*, or *abide*, doth not imply that it shall never depart : the Scripture tells us, *John 3. 36.* That *he that believes not, the Wrath of God abides upon him* ; doth it follow from hence, that it is impossible for him that is an Unbeliever, and as such under the abiding Wrath of God, to be a Believer ?

So Whoremongers, Adulterers, Idolaters, *1 Cor. 6. 10. Heb. 13. 4.* are threatened with the loss of the Kingdom of Heaven, without any mention made, that if they repent afterwards, the Punishment shall be reversed ; yet would it not be strange Divinity to affirm, That no such kind of Sinners shall enjoy Life and Salvation upon their Repentance. So God promiseth Life and Salvation to just and faithful Men, without mentioning the loss of Life and Salvation they are like to sustain in case they turn aside ; yet manifest it is in Scripture, such are threatened with *death and destruction*, as *Ezek. 18. 24, 25. & 33. 12, 13.* it being ordinary in Scripture to predict unto Men, both Future Punishment and Reward, according to their present Ways, whether Good or Evil.

Philet. I believe many Believers fall away ; but by their falling away they plain-

ly declare, they were never of the number of real Saints.

Philad. The Apostle speaks of *some in his days that made Shipwrack of Faith, &c.*

Philet. Ay, what Faith was it? It was only a temporary Faith, or a light believing the Gospel, such as believe for a season, and then fall away, like the stony ground; but this differs much from true Justifying Faith.

Philad. He that received the Seed in stony ground, might be a true Believer as well as the other; for that Faith which springs from the same Seed of the Gospel, must needs be of one and the same nature and kind; neither doth the withering of a man's Faith in time of Temptation, prove he never had true Faith, or that it differs in nature from that which is real and endures to the end: the Scripture owns no such distinction that I know of; neither do I see but that that Faith which endureth but a short time, may be as real and true in Nature, as that which abides all a Man's days.

But if a temporary Faith, a Faith that is not accompanied with Justification and Salvation, be the Faith that these are said to fall from; then is it such a Faith that they are exhorted to persevere in: and surely he would not exhort them to keep such a Faith with which they might perish, and which would certainly fail them; neither can you
possibly

possibly prove that *those that made Shipwrack of Faith and a good Conscience*, never were true Believers.

Besides, if to fall from a false hypocritical dead Faith, be the Apostacy that the Scripture speaks of; surely it would not be a Sin of so high a provocation to God (*Heb. 10. ult.*) as the Scriptures declare it to be, and which you in your preaching and printing declare it to be. But I must away, I shall be thought long.

Philet. One word more, What say you to *John 13. 1. Having loved his own which were in the World, he loved them to the end?*

Philad. Who questions the continuance of God's or Christ's Love to those that continue in love, and faithful to him? The question is of the continuance of our Love to him, *John 8. 31. If ye continue in my Word, &c. John 15. 9, 10. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my Love: And if ye keep my Commandments, ye shall abide in my Love.* Now if there were no danger of losing their Love to Christ, there were no need for Christ to exhort them to keep his Commands, in order to their abiding in his Love. But this place shews that Christ having loved his own, he loved them to the end of his days; 'tis not said of their days, but all the time of his abode in the World: here's nothing of the final perseverance of the Saints, how despe-

desperately wicked soever they be: but what if the Lord should so set his Love upon these his beloved Disciples that were given him out of the World by his Father, that maugre all the Frailties of the Flesh, and the Temptations of the World, and the Devil, yet none of them should be lost, but that they should be carried on through all Difficulties to the fruition of Eternal Glory? Doth it prove, that because some shall never fall, that therefore no true Believer can fall away? Pray consider the Parable of the Prodigal Son, the lost Groat, the lost Sheep; doth it not shew that a true Believer may be lost, and being lost may be found?

Moderat. I believe God hath elected a certain number to Salvation; and those that are given out of the World to Christ, he will not fail to keep them to himself, but will, by interposing Grace, so preserve them, that they shall never perish: But the others that Christ died for, upon condition of their repentance, believing and persevering therein to the end, I dare not say but some of these may believe for a time (and that with a true Faith) believe, and yet fall away so as to perish: these times have afforded many sad and shaking Examples of this kind, and I am not strictly certain of my perseverance, and so not fully or strictly certain of my own Salvation.

Philet.

Philet. O what an uncomfortable Doctrine is this of falling from Grace?

Philad. This Doctrine doth not destroy all Christian Comfort, but a Life of much Christian Comfort may be had out of it, seeing it is the unchangeable Purpose of God to give Life and Salvation to all those that shall persevere in Faith and Holiness to the end; and that if they will but quit themselves like Men, abstain from all foolish and hurtful Lusts, and not wilfully stab their own Souls, nor pull Misery upon their own Heads, they shall be happy.

And what tho true Believers may be under a possibility of perishing, yet seeing God hath through his bounty vouchsafed unto them so rich, and such full proportion of Means, thereby to prevent their perishing, and to preserve them from Apostacy, so that they need not apostatize or perish except they themselves please; why should it abate any of their Comforts or Hopes of Salvation, because under a possibility of perishing?

Men may possibly fall into the Fire and be burnt, or into the Water and be drowned, from the top of Houses and be dashed in pieces; yet no Man lives ever a whit the more uncomfortable, because under a possibility of suffering these Evils, because they know God hath given them Reason and Understanding to preserve them from these

these things. The Apostle *Paul* knew that he was under a possibility of being a Castaway, 1 Cor. 9. 27. yet how chearfully, and at what an excellent rate of comfort did he live; *I am perswaded*, saith he, *Rom.* 8. 38, 39. *that neither death, nor life, nor things present, nor things to come, &c.* The assurance he had, that upon a diligent use of the means which God of his Grace had vouchsafed to him, he should prevent his being a Castaway, made him live at that height of confidence and courage which he did.

What can no one enjoy comfortable hopes of Heaven, unless they have a full and perfect assurance of the continuance of the Love of God to them, how loosely and profanely soever they live; and that if they commit all manner of Sin and Wickedness, affront Heaven, defy the Almighty, laugh Jesus and his Gospel to scorn, yet they run no hazard of losing their Souls? Indeed such a Doctrine as this (and such is the Doctrine of Absolute and Unconditional Perseverance) contributes to the peace and comfort of the carnal part in Men, and indulgeth to them a liberty of Sin; but no Child of God that hath received of that Spirit whereby it can cry, *Abba Father*, either wisheth or desires Heaven or Salvation but in the way of holiness, and upon that condition which the Lord Christ enjoined it,

it, *John* 15. 10. Nor is it possible that any Man should have comfortable hopes of Heaven, or any assurance of being saved, unless he hath, through Grace, discharged those Duties to which the Blessing and Privileges are therein promised: This is the Foundation whereupon, through Christ, to build our Hopes and Comforts, and not that God loves us for we know not what reason, and that we cannot possibly sin our selves out of his Love, but he will infallibly bring us to Heaven; no, but saith the Apostle, *1 John* 2. 3, 5. *Chap.* 3. 18, 19, 20, 24. *Chap.* 5. 18. *hereby we know* and are assured *that we are in God, and that he loves us.* But how comes Persons to this? *why, if we love him, and keep his commandments,* which if we do, we shall never fall, *2 Pet.* 1. 10.

But I must beg your excuse at this time, I cannot stay; only I desire you to consider this one thing concerning falling from true Grace.

If we consider Faith and Regeneration in themselves, they may be lost, because nothing in it self is unchangeable but God; it cannot be said of any but God, that *he cannot lie*: and if so, then all Men may lie, and that Lie may be our ruin for ought we know, *Rev.* 21. 27. And tho I do not doubt but that there is a State of Grace attainable in this Life, from which
Persons

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F I N I S.

310
I have of late been
in a great deal of
distress of mind
and have been
much troubled
with the thought
that I am
not doing
enough for
God. I have
been very
careless of
my duty
and have
been very
negligent
in my
conduct.
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